

SURFING LIFE

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CALENDAR

+ FEATURES ON
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KALANI BALL,
JACKSON COFFEY
& ISABELLA NICHOLS



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JACOB WILCOX, KALANI BALL, ETHAN EWING,
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WILLIE MELINZ, LAURA PONGINI, ALYSSA LUCH



SURFER: KAI HING
PHOTO: ANDREW SHIELD

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THE THIRST IS REAL

THE AUSSIES DYING TO TAKE IT TO THE WORLD

IN THE MENTAWAIS WITH KAI HING, SHELDON SIMKUS, ETHAN EWING,
RILEY LAING, REEF DOIG AND QUINN BRUCE



ISSUE 327 DEC 2015

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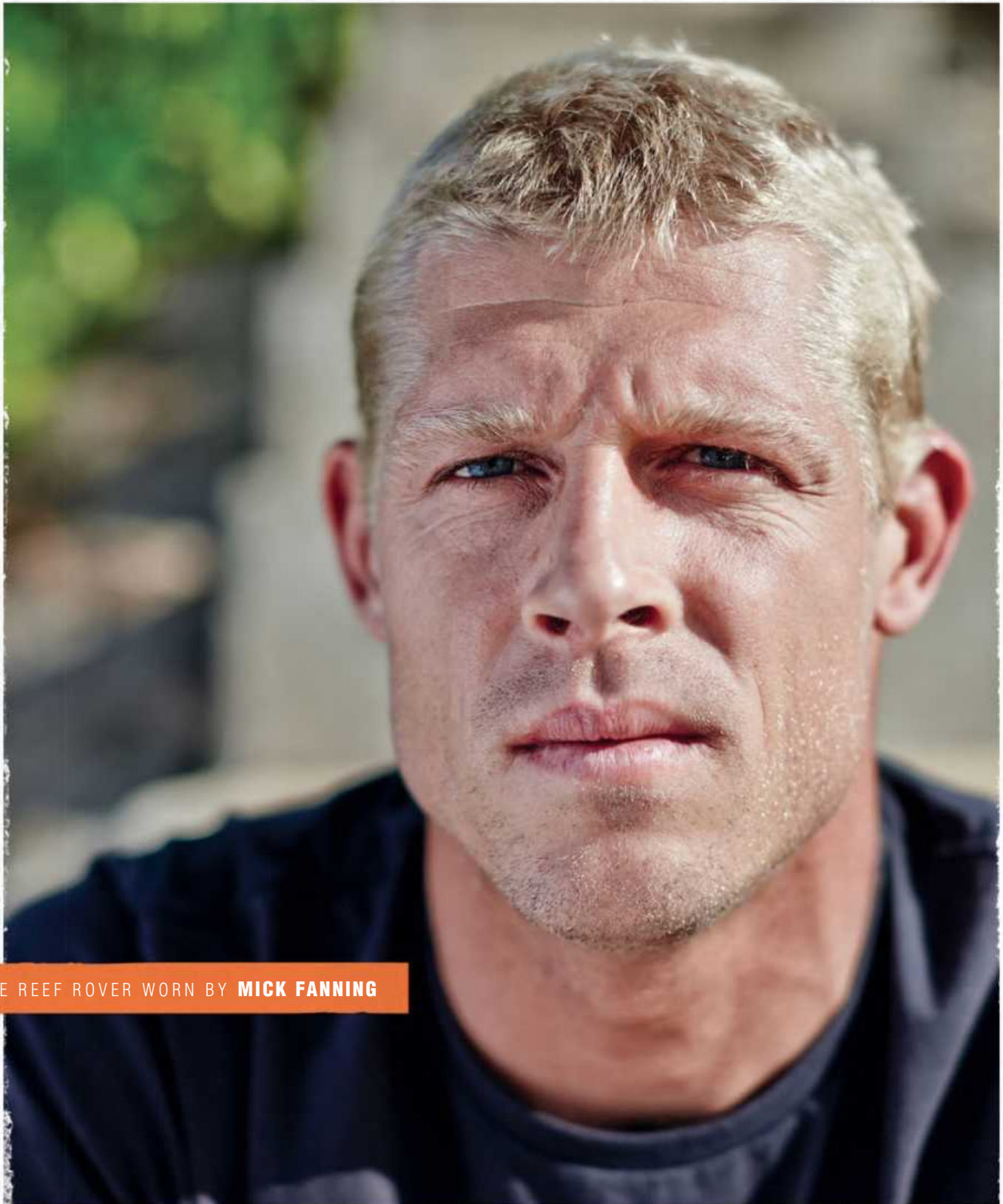


"It meant heaps to be invited along on the Hot 100 trip. I've been watching them all since I was little and it was always all the best guys being invited along and they were always the best movies that you wanted to watch. When I heard I was coming along I was stoked. It was the best feeling ever. It's weird, it went that quick; just four years ago I was watching the trips, and now I'm on one of them. I was pretty buggered by the end of it all and I was pretty ready to get home! But after the first week at home and being back at school I wanted to go straight back. Surfing every day is the best thing!"

**– Quinn Bruce, revealing the benefits of surfing every day.
PHOTO: SHIELD**

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COVER SHOT

SURFER: Kai Hing
PHOTO: Andrew Shield

Kai Hing has had a big year. Won the junior series, number one on the Hot 100, and his first ever cover! This merman-child is on the brink of greatness.

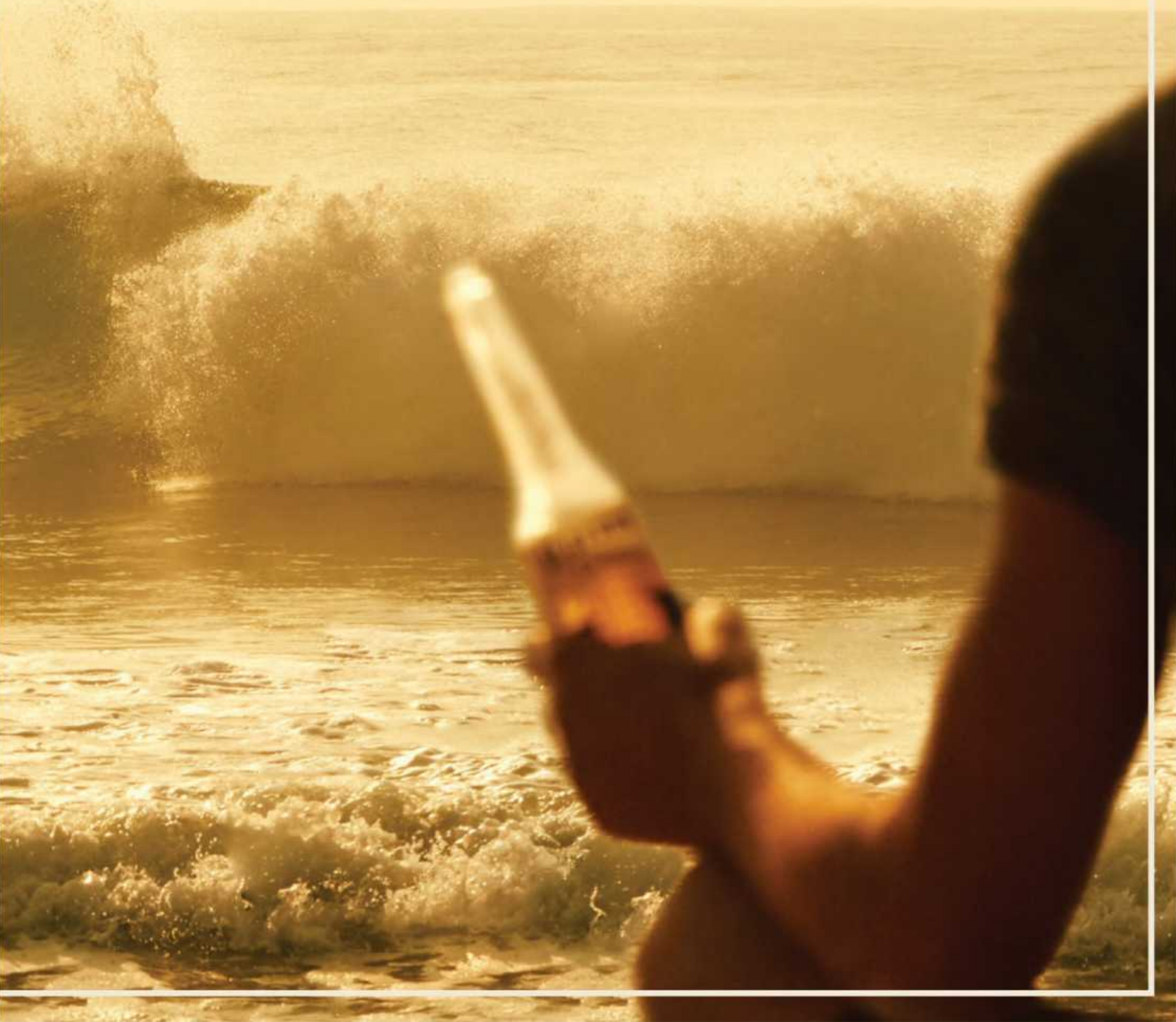
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THE FOLLY OF FORGETTING THEIR YOUTH



They're like opposite gremlins, these gromlins – you've got problems when they're dry, not wet. Just look at the crook heads that Ethan and Sheldon are running here, seriously bummed to be momentarily on the boat and not in the drink. *While I may not be a dad, all the captions in this magazine are pretty much dad jokes. Enjoy.
PHOTO: ANDREW SHIELD

I don't have kids, probably never will. Kids and my lifestyle just don't mesh; I'm too selfish to properly take care of myself let alone another being. Because I don't have kids I don't have to deal with kid shit – I don't have to worry about them getting into trouble and growing up to be jerkish embarrassments to my family name. I also am not forced to ruin my holidays by taking kids away with me. I like that other people have kids; I enjoy spending time with my niece and nephew (What up, Mia and Dee!) and other children, playing with their toys and watching their cartoons, but then I like handing them back. Full-time care of sprogs, even temporarily, is not for me and thus I avoid it.

I avoid it, that is, until we do our yearly Hot 100 trip and then, for a couple of weeks, six brats come into my care. Six brats who have had more life experience than me, sure, six brats who surf better than my wildest cheese dreams, who have travelled the world and found success and known strange women and partied and have friends on every continent and make more money than me and have more social status, sure, but six brats nonetheless. And after a while, trapped out in our isolated Mentawaiian paradise, all the trappings of being a hot-shot junior surfer melt

away and all that's left are the brats.

For the most part these kids are tops. They teach me things that I'm too old to discover on my own, like music and movies and the sayings the hip kids are saying (dope!), and they like to have a laugh and a joke. Sometimes they let me have a wave or two, or they compliment me on my bog turns, or they have a beer if they're old enough to have a beer. Most of the time these brats are great young men who do great young men things and inhabit a high rung in my step ladder of man-to-man estimations. I even find myself sharing stories with them that I shouldn't, mistakenly thinking that they're little men.

But then they act like big kids. They act like bratty schoolkids and I am reminded why I am incapable of having children of my own. Sometimes on this trip the kids formed factional gangs and picked on someone or each other; sometimes they'd pick on me, sometimes they'd refuse to surf, or sulk, or sit in their room and play on their phone while the Mentawai's did its thing. Sometimes they didn't want to eat their vegetables and sometimes they told me that I can't tell them what to do because I'm not their real dad.

Kids, brats, groms – of which a brave number of

you, our cherished readers, are, and all of us once were – can be difficult to deal with. Our parents usually do exceptional jobs of understanding youngsters and not getting fed up with them. And despite the goals these professional junior surfers have kicked, despite the airs of maturity, despite the fans and the accolades and TV interviews and Instagram-famous concubines; despite all these things that set up the best junior surfers for futures as surfing heroes, deep down they're just fucking kids, and as such are prone to the same developmental confusions and growing pains as other fucking kids.

And when we realise that, that these kids are juggling normal kid stuff with extraordinary surfer stuff, doesn't it make all the other achievements just so much more worthy of our admiring?

These are the best junior surfers in Australia; a bunch of guys who are working out how to weld freakish talent in the water with being a kid with being in the public eye with having to work with old, barren magazine editors. Their lives are just beginning, and as they eventually shake the final undesirable vestiges of youth they will begin to shine as surfers and men. And they'll probably have kids of their own before I do, over-achieving little bastards. – **Wade Davis**



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PHOTO. SWILLY





START SPREADING THE NEWS

📷 MATT CLARK ✂️ WADE DAVIS
🕒 1:06PM, 6TH OCTOBER, 2015

That surf journalists have an indelible hard-on for New York City. Every time there's an inkling of a swell we're singing the city's praises, and while we've got hard-ons for plenty of places, they infallibly have more consistent and better surf than NYC, so why the chubby for the Big Apple? Well, surf journos believe that we are peers of the writers of New York and Paris and Adelaide; that we too are creative literary types, artists who react to our environment and who would indeed succeed at skyline levels if we were freed from the world of surf, somewhat, and allowed to flourish in the city that doesn't sleep.

And New York has waves, we inform babes in bars, and lean in close and tell them how one day we're going to live there and surf and write and be inspired by the world's greatest city, as if tapping out fart jokes at Surfing Life Towers has somehow endeared us to the NYC arts scene, who must just be dying to welcome us with open arms...

The brutal truth is, however, that we will never be cool enough for New York City, apart from in some sort of touristic capacity, and if you're bleeding pennies having a gander at the Big Apple you're going to have to be both really lucky to score a swell, and really keen to give up your bone-headed wanderings around Manhattan to make the most of it.

Nevertheless, and let us reiterate for the umpteenth time, there are waves in New York City, down at Rockaway Beach, Long Island, and you can catch the something line of the subway and be from downtown to tubetown to poundtown in zero minutes flat. Don't we sound like a pack of cosmopolitan and worldly men and women of letters when we make the association between our sport and the Atlantic-facing megalopolis?

Well, Hurricane Joaquin recently blew its guts out around the southern end of the US Atlantic coast, and NYC reaped the barrelling benefits, and once again we dreamt of a life full of poetry discussions and rooftop cocktails and painter girlfriends who are from the Slavic lands, East Asia, Latin America, or a mosaic of the three ethnicities in some god-ain't-real-because-this-is-more-beautiful-than-any-deity-could-create girl who'd fall for us, our brilliance behind a vintage typewriter, and our prowess amongst the Long Island curlers.

NYC native, photographer Matt Clark, was on hand for the Joaquin swell, and was kind enough to throw out some Yankee fastballs of advice on getting your groove on in grimy Gotham grinders.

"Fall is usually the most consistent time of year, with late winter falling second place by a short amount. We used to be guaranteed one or two hurricane swells per year, if not more, but in the past 5-10 years it's really dropped off and become very polar. Some years it's consistent and other years it's a dry spell. In my opinion hurricane swells aren't the best swells we get. Hurricanes give us those long period swells that are much better for further up north where the reefs/slabs are. The beach breaks of NY rarely get great on

longer period swells; we love the windswell/medium period swells. When we have a nor'easter in the fall and it's cold and windy and rainy, those are the best swells; the beach breaks are peakier on the shorter period swells, if it's long period it tends to line up a little bit too much. There are hundreds of miles of basically unexplored coastline north of New York that gets world class on hurricane swells though, just not many people are exploring the nooks and crannies. Just look at a map of the north-east USA and you will see.

"Surfing is HUGE in New York now. Fifteen years ago, if you surfed, you were a 'psycho' and looked like a total weirdo because you had a circle tan on your face from where your 6/5/4 wetsuit didn't cover in the middle of winter. Now, every shoobie is out there during the summer, dinging up their boards and wearing their \$200 boardshorts from the local hipster surf brand. At times I think people buy surfboards to pose for Instagram lifestyle photos, but they're never on it when it's good. It's all about image, so that's where surfing is now in NY. It may not be the healthiest it's ever been, but it's the most popular it's ever been.

"This past swell I would say western Long Island had the best days of surf. The island's south-facing shore runs almost straight east-west and the hurricane tracks tend to run alongside the whole east coast and then run out into the Atlantic just south of NY, so we get the brunt of the swell pointed right at us. Western Long Island was positioned perfectly for the north winds we got, and the jetties made amazing left-draining barrels. There was one jetty that was the best this past swell, where the east in the swell brought a little current and built up the sand off the jetty where it was only waist-deep water and would double up these lefts off the jetty, making for perfect heaving barrels, as seen in the shots. It was just perfect barrels all morning long."

There you have it, NYC gets predictable waves, and living a surfer's life in the Big Apple is an actual possibility – just don't let too many surf journos know about it; as soon as it becomes feasible we'll move out there to think about writing our great unstarted novels whilst speaking really loudly in Brooklyn bars in the vain attempt to get an Aussie-accent pump. *Strewth, a coupla tinnies couldya darlin', and get a wriggle on, I'm flat out like a lizard drinkin'!* Anyway, like I was saying, I'm a writer and yes, I do surf. Do I want to come to your loft and watch you paint? 🐦







GET JACKED, WORLD

📷 ANDREW SHIELD

✍️ RYAN JONES 🕒 10:20AM, 21ST OCTOBER, 2015

By the time you collect this magazine out of your letterbox or pull it off the newsagent shelf or download it on your iPad or iPhone or steal it from your best mate's backpack, there'll really only be two QS events left. Sure there's a QS1500 in Taiwan, but, pfft, the big boys want the big points, and with only the final two Hawaiian QS10000s left, final rankings on the second-tier tour are beginning to take shape, foreshadowing a significant shake up at the elite level.

Each year, on average, two-to-four QS surfers make the jump to the CT. In 2016, however, a record number of QS surfers appear likely to qualify. Currently, there are only four CT surfers inside the QS Top 10 – Kolohe, Filipe, Miguel and Jeremy – with two of these guys looking to definitely re-qualify through the CT – Filipe and Jeremy – and the other two only needing one solid result on the CT to come back in through that avenue. Stepping back out a bit slightly, in the top 30 on the QS, there are a further three CT guys floating around – Melling, Wiggoly and Italo – with two of these guys looking to definitely re-qualify through the CT – Wiggoly and Italo – and Melling only needing one solid result on the CT to come back in through that avenue.

So, what does all this mean?

Well, for starters, at this stage of the game, if you're outside of the Top 30 on the QS, you're pretty much done. With seven CT guys in the top 30, four of which are all but assured CT qualification through the elite tour – Felipe, Jeremy, Italo and Wiggoly – and with the other three only one

result away from getting in via the CT – a worst case scenario for the QS guys would be at least nine surfers getting the call-up to the CT. It would have been just seven, but Freddie and CJ have both stepped aside to make way for more new blood.

Yeah, yeah ... but what does all this MEAN!?

Well, WSL Tour Co-ordinator, notorious stats-man, and Good Will Hunting-esque savant, Al Hunt, has pegged this year's QS cut-off to be 18,000 points. This means four QS surfers are currently safe by Al's estimation. At the time of writing, there were 14 surfers stuffed between 13,000 points and 17,000 points, all bouncing around, right on the bubble, just one good result away from qualification. Let's also not forget the retirement rumours circulating wildly as the end of the year draws nearer – Taj, Bede, Parko, Kai, Kelly? 2016 is looking like a bumper year for new faces on the CT with a potential record number of guys departing and rookies emerging.

But... argh, goddammit... WHAT. DOES. THIS. ACTUALLY. MEEEEAN!?

Oh, sorry, sorry! Well, while we don't want to jinx anyone, or get our hopes up too soon, we kind of, sort of, think and hope and wish that it means we're all going to see Jack Freestone, third on the QS at time of writing, on the World Tour next year. Fuck yeah, Jack! We've also got our fingers crossed for the nicest guy to ever grace the Qualifying Series, Ryan Callinan, 11th on the QS at time of writing, but let's try not to get too far ahead of ourselves. Have at 'em, boys, bring it home strong! 🐻

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ENTHUSIASM

DEMONSTRATION BY SHELDON SIMKUS AT LANCE'S RIGHT, INDONESIA
SEQUENCE BY ANDREW SHIELD



Ascarily wise man once told me something concerning the title of this Technique. (We weren't talking about surfing, by the way.) I was telling him about a person I knew, who I described like this: "They don't know anything, but bloody hell they're enthusiastic." He looked at me and said: "Given the choice between enthusiastic and expert, I'll take enthusiastic any day."

I puzzled over this for a long time, trying to figure out what this man, who seemed to me to be the very embodiment of expertise, could possibly have been trying to tell me. Like – surely the whole goal, indeed the great mission of any creative endeavour, is to reach that summit of refined skill and knowledge accorded to the Expert. Isn't that the fucken point?

Eventually I got there – understood what he was telling me, that is. I think. But let's save that up and see if there's something in this lovely afternoon move at Lance's that might guide us toward some thoughts on the subject.



THE BREAKDOWN

I like how Sheldon approaches it, for a start. Look at shot one and you see a wave with more energy behind it than in front. There's plenty of speed in his line, but a relaxed attitude to a gentle lip line ahead. He's read it really well and used that speed to get way up the face – much higher than you'd be if you were planning to plant the rail and rip a large conventional hack out of it. His positioning tells us what's happening next... that and a slight

shift forward in weighting. Sheldon's taking some pressure off the fins, a sure sign he wants to liberate them from their oppression.

By shot four they're liberated, all right. But check the front inside rail. It's replaced the fins as the anchor point in the move. This is one of the big insights in modern post-Slater performance surfing – that the whole rail is in the game, not just the bits near the fin cluster. It inverts the whole idea about 'rail turns', and

does it in a very pure way; one that relates directly to the nature of a wave and a surfboard. Like – a wave is a curve, and so is a surfboard's nose rocker. Fit them together and this is what you get.

But it's still a crapshoot. For a moment the whole thing hangs in the balance. The tail is freed to flip around and over, shots five to nine, then in shot 10, it catches in the wave face. That feeling of the fins grabbing is what you wait for in these moves –

a sense of reconnection that can't be forced, only encouraged. In this case, Sheldon doesn't really even need to encourage it, he's just gotta ride it out, and he does that easily. You thought you'd never see that board's nose again, but in shot 12 there it is, swung around on the fin cluster's pivot point... and suddenly it's as if the whole move was just a normal top turn, or a stalled floater or something. Except it wasn't.



→ THE LESSON

Experts don't blow it. They've learned how not to, often the hard way. But how do you get to trust your front rail edge?

That's what my wise old friend was trying to tell me. Expertise is awesome and all, but its basis is formed from the past – from all the things you've already done. It's the end product of experience. And when it comes to trying something new, an expert's deep experience and desire to avoid error might just be the thing that most gets in the way.

On the other hand, enthusiasm is a starting point. Enthusiasm helps you think afresh, take a leap of faith that the fins will reconnect. It's what paddles you happily back out after blowing something six times, and what gets you to try the seventh. Enthusiasm is the Future. 🐣



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Well, sometimes worries. When there was no surf, or we were surfed out, the lack of signal was a worry. When Owen was bagging 20-point heats like the kinda guy who likes 20-point heats, it was a worry. When the Blues beat the Maroons in game one it was a real worry. When Reef Doig wanted to talk to his girlfriend, or Riley Laing wanted to check the swell, it was a worry; sometimes no signal was a bit of a worry.

But most of the time it was no worries. We weren't out there to update Instagram, although Instagram updates do keep the folks at home jealous and thirsty. We weren't there to rant on Facebook, we weren't there to be sent sexy Snapchats, even though if we were anywhere else in the world, sexy Snaps and Facebook rants make the world go 'round. Having no signal, no 3G, not even any GPRS, a little Wi-Fi (but it's getting better out there, any day now, the boys assured us), was no worries, because we weren't out there to bury our heads in our phones.

We were there to make the Hot 100, to get the best waves that we could and to push each other and everybody to dazzling new heights of high performance Australian junior surfing – below the lip and above it, sometimes next to it, even in front of it. Having signal was second fiddle to having swell, and swell we had; and while we were sometimes frustrated with our slow internet access*, it was all forgotten with every head that was dipped and larry that was laid back.

As technology advances and we become more and more entwined with the internet, it was nice to take a step back for a couple of weeks and remember what really matters in life – getting shacked out of your scone, and then, as soon as you get near a decent Wi-Fi connection, checking out that awesome backlog of Snaps that you've got waiting for you...

*While interned on a tropical island paradise surrounded by perfect waves, in a part of the world where the locals are some of the most disadvantaged people on earth, by Western standards, and here we are even commenting on the internet connection – cry us a fucken river, right?



SIGNAL?

NO WORRIES

📷 ANDREW SHIELD





We told Kai that if he pulled into a 10-foot closeout he'd get the cover. We were totally joking, but at least now we look like we honoured our wager.

KAI HING



**BLOWIN' UP LIKE
YOU THOUGHT I
WOULD**

RYAN JONES

From New Zealand to Taiwan to the Mentawais, and now, back to the Mentawais, this is the fourth time in three years that Kai Hing has been on a Surfing Life wave-hunting mission. He's one of our go-to young guns. Consistent. Photogenic. A hard worker. The trip that stands out in my mind, however, is our driving tour of New Zealand's North Island. Kai, Harry Bryant, Kalani Ball, Cooper Chapman, filmer Sam Norwood and myself in a cramped six-berth campervan, around the Taranaki, across to the Coromandel Peninsula and back again. Cold. Cramped. Crazy. Paradise.

Kai surfed well on that trip. Really well. He nailed arguably the shot of the trip at a dreamy, right-hand wedge off the beaten track; cliff backdrop, bright green water and a huge, tail-high air-reverse – shot by Kiwi-bro-legend Rambo Estrada. It was an epic turn and a brilliant shot. And Kai knew it. He also knew that magazine trips meant exposure. He knew that if you came away and blew up you'd get the most exposure. And if you really blew up, hell, you might get a cover. The shot in question was cover-worthy. He knew it was the moment he stomped it.



Lock up your daughters, your sisters, mothers, some of your brothers, maybe a dad or two, Kai's back (double entendre, boom!).

Kai didn't get the cover, though. Because, in magazine land, while 'best shot wins' is the mantra we all spruik, the actual composure of, and manoeuvre, in the shot are only two variables of a number that are considered. Does the shot fit the magazine's content? What did we run last issue? What are our competition running? And so on and so forth. Jackson Baker ended up scoring the cover of *Surfing Life* #312: *The Pacific*, with a Bosko, water-shot, alley-oop over the roofs of the Stockton beachfront shacks. This was all announced to Jackson Baker, funnily enough, on the 2014 Hot 100 trip, where Kai was also present. For Kai, it was

a test of integrity. A test of humility.

Kai didn't get the cover he wanted. And while he passed the tests – wholeheartedly congratulating Jacko – Kai was also quite bummed. Visibly, audibly, expressly bummed. It impacted his mental state. It impacted his life. He wanted to know why and how he didn't get the cover. He wanted answers. He wanted to know how he could change things in the future so he DID land page one. He wanted to improve. He wanted to do better. He wanted to do the best. Be the best.

This anecdote explains a lot about Kai Hing. While *nice guys finish last* is a bit of a tired myth, it

definitely won't hurt your chances of finishing first if you've got some killer instinct. If you place your interests first and are willing to fight, tooth and nail, to win, to be better than your peers, then you've got a damn good chance of doing just that. Kai is more than willing.

"Both in and out of the water, if it's something I really feel I want to be the best at, then I'm over-the-top competitive! Ever since I was little, from rugby to athletics to gymnastics to surfing... I've been super competitive. If it's a game of pool, for example, or something that I've been playing for a while, and someone comes up and beats me, I'll want to play



50 more games until I beat them. I won't leave until I win. If I see all the boys trying their hardest to nail some sick shit, then I just want to land the biggest air I can, or hit the biggest section I can. I want to show guys like you [magazines], and other trips that people have invited me along, that I'm trying to get the best content for the issue, movie or website. When you or your sponsors have paid the money, and you've set aside the time to come on a trip, you want to get out the value you've put in. There's going to be a cover going down, there's going to be video parts going down and there's going to be spreads in the magazine... you want to make the most of it while you can. You want to take the opportunity while you've got it."

And that's the attitude you get from Kai when you're around him, and especially on a trip with him and his peers – his competition – in the middle of the jungle. He's brash. He's bold. He's assertive. And while this might rub some people the wrong way, in reality, there's no shame in a desire to be the best you can be. To be the best. Period. As Kai's profile grows, so does his hunger for the recognition and exposure he feels that he's earned and deserved. He wants to be the best and he's not afraid of saying that, or letting it be known in his actions on land or in the water.

"People always ask, *What will you do if surfing doesn't work out?* I just say *I'll deal with that when and if*. If you want to succeed at something you have to be all in. So, for now, all I'm focusing on is being the best surfer I can be, and hopefully I can get as much out of it as I can. I love surfing and wouldn't want to do anything else while growing up, especially as my job! For the rest of 2015 I'm just putting a lot of work into my surfing, trying to get as close to 100 per cent as

I can for the start of 2016. I want to give myself every chance to win World Juniors and I want to get as much coverage as I can; working on clips and getting some cool shots. On this trip I think I hurt Reef's feelings [Hurley stablemate, Reef Doig] and I think I might have gone too far at one point. I felt bad. We all give each other shit on the Junior Series. Straight up. You give someone shit and they give it right back. If they can't take it, then don't give it. But I didn't want anyone to feel bad or not have a good time. At the time it seemed like a bit of a low point on the trip, but I think that it was largely just stress in needing to get stuff done and wanting to nail the best stuff we could considering the conditions we had; well, at least for me it felt like that. It was just a little bit of banter that came down to us all being so competitive, and as time went on it all came good. By the end we were drinking beers, playing cards and rapping to Biggie."

In 2014 Kai finished ninth on the Junior Series and fourth in the Hot 100. In the profile we ran in the ensuing magazine, we presented Kai Hing as a Golden Child; one of those kids who is great at all the sports that are demanded of him. Charming, and invariably liked. Handsome and popular with the opposite sex. From a good, loving family. Funny and witty and daring. A bright future jam-packed with triumphs and highs and oversized novelty cheques and model girlfriends. An unbeatable combination of natural ability and tenacity, small-wave moxie and big-juice wherewithal. A marketer's dream. Kai's growth as a surfer, and young man, has been the picture of Golden Child evolution.

"When I started surfing, I was about five and my first real memories of surfing are on a foamy out at Noosa, but I actually hated it back then!



Spinning at the speed
of Kaihoo Serious.

The water stung my eyes and I could never get to my feet, ha! But when I was eight or nine and all of my friends did school surfing comps, I wanted a day off school too, so I joined in. After seeing all my mates having so much fun doing it, I couldn't miss out and had to keep giving it a go. When I was a grom I actually did more gymnastics than surfing, but as soon as I got to about 14 or 15 I gave that up, though, and just focused on surfing, and my family have made sure that I have stuck to it and have been able to be as successful as I have so far. Family is everything to me. When I'm away on long stints all I think about is having a big feast and watching some movies with the fam. Growing up, all I wanted to do was to get out of the Sunny Coast due to lack of waves! But now I'm older I couldn't see myself living anywhere else. My mum's been super supportive since I was little, driving and flying with me to comps. I definitely have her to thank largely for where I am now, plus my brother and his friends for really getting me into it."

Not a great deal has changed in 12 months, realistically. Kai is still a Golden Child. Still from a loving family. Still good at everything he touches. Still with incredible potential. The thing with Golden Children, however, is that at some point they're forced to break free of the gilded shackles and reveal themselves as the true person that they are. For Kai, freshly 18, finishing number one in both the Hot 100 and the Junior Series, and about to embark

on a truly international surfing career, that time is now. What kind of person is he going to be? What kind of surfer is he going to be?

"I have a lot of respect for guys like Noa and Creed. But going solely down that road is a gamble, and unless you back yourself 100 per cent, it's really hard to make it. Noa is one of my favourite surfers, just due to the fact that he stuck to his guns and did what he wanted to do, and he's done so well so far. I would definitely feel honoured if a grom looked up to us like we looked up to the Hot 100 guys in the past. Ideally, I'd really love to get on Tour and stay there. Be in a title conversation. I want to leave a mark. When it's all said and done, though, the feeling you get riding a wave can't be duplicated. It's the greatest feeling in the world. That's why I chose surfing. As long as I can be going on trips with my close friends and getting clips and having a blast, I'll be happy. You can't get much better than that."

As Kai departs junior surfing for good, as the biggest fish in a small pond, he'll be joining the ocean of surfers vying for a spot on surfing's elite tour. Friends, family, surfing for fun, a respect for his peers and being able to avoid the innate distractions that come with being a young pro surfer, are all equally as important as a desire to be the best. Growing up is hard to do, especially as a young pro surfer. But Kai appears prepared to tackle it head on, and with a balanced perspective on those things that are

important and deserve his attention.

"Girls are always going to be there, and I won't lie, it's pretty distracting being at comps and there are some hotties walking around! But if you're committed and want to win you can easily keep your eyes on the prize. To be honest, most of the time all of the girls want the winner after the comp anyway, so if you're a grom out there reading this, just focus on winning the comp and then celebrate after! Social media started off purely as networking and a bit of self-promotion, but now it seems like it's turned into a competition over who can have the most followers or who has the most likes. My sponsors pay and support me, so whenever they need me to post something I figure that it's the least I can do for them. To be honest though, I'm a little over the whole Instagram thing. Sometimes I think it would be rad if it went back to the hype it used to have about getting an amazing shot in a magazine or your sickest clips going on a hard-copy movie."

In the case of the Hot 100, Kai, the hype is well and truly present, and deserved. In the case of page one of the Hot 100 issue, all the variables aligned for 2015 Australasian Junior Series winner, the best under-18 surfer in Australia, Kai Hing. What's next is up to Kai. But, right now, he's nailed his first cover, holds the two most important titles in Australian junior surfing, and holds an insatiable desire to be the best. If you don't know, know you know. Maybe, one day, he'll be the best. We'll be watching. 🐳

THE WORLD

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With his nonstop energy, twisted sense of humor, and manic cackle, six Paul Fisher's is five too many. But a man can never have enough surfboards. And while he may be well known as "the guy who rides a dick board," Fish is far from a one-dick pony, he shreds everything SUPERbrand from the Fling to the Vapors on the regular! With high shredability in mind, slight modifications, all new graphics and tees to match—there's a setup for everyone. The World Is Super.

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Photographed by Swilly



SHELDON

SIMKUS



THE NICEST SNAKE AT SNAPPER

REINTRODUCING THE SLIPPERY MR SIMKUS

WADE DAVIS

He's not really a snake; I mean, no more a snake than anybody else behind Snapper's ubiquitous rock. Sheldon Shelby Shellshocked Shellfish Simkus grew up around Snapper, started surfing there, and has thus earned his right to an inflated wave tally. Sheldon, who before last year's Hot 100 was a relative unknown (unless you had the (dis)pleasure of surfing with him at Snapper – kid can catch a wave!), has gone from strength to strength, from pits to flips, and while he was a last minute addition to last year's trip, this year he was a no-brainer. Shell was one of two guys who stuck around for a few more days when we saw that our original schedule would see us missing the swell of the millennium by a day; Smelldun was a standout amongst standouts.

He's also as nice as they come. He doesn't possess the entitled arrogance that can plague and restrict junior sport stars; he doesn't feel like he's owed anything. Sure, the little bastard can get under your skin and up the inside, and certainly he doesn't mind a cheeky little jibe here and there (read: always), but overwhelmingly he's a lad of good humour and an exceptional work ethic, and it's on the back of this that he'll succeed where some of his more talented peers may fail.



Shelby's a big kid, and this is a big tube, and his eyebrows are perfect (turn the page to confirm, one turn one like one confirmation).





SHELDON

So, after the trip we caught up with The Shelminator at his beloved Café D'bar and we had a chat about him, his past, the future, and so on. He's a handsome man with a hint of a mullet, soft eyes and a nothing-suss smile, according to SL team member Mimi, who thinks the kid's a knockout (you're in, Scrowldon). Anyway, we threw some little Qs at the young fella, and what follows is a handbook on how to juggle being an exceptional surfer with being a deadset good bloke. Groms of Australia, have a read and take notes.

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS.

"I was born in Tweed Heads Hospital and I've lived there ever since. Growing up in Tweed was all right; not being on the beach was hard, but my mum was really good and she'd drive me to surf whenever I wanted. Mum helped me heaps with surfing; she'd take me every day, drop whatever she was doing and drive me to the beach, which was awesome. Then my older sister got her licence when I was about eight, and she could also drive me to the beach.

"When I was about four I picked up a board while my sister was doing nippers, and sort of started surfing then, doing it mainly in the summer. I never even knew about wetsuits back then, but as soon as I did, when I was around eight or 10, I started surfing full-time and going in comps. I surfed in the under 12s final at the Occy for a few years and never made a heat; then in the under 14s I made a final, and I thought the Occy was the biggest comp in the world, and after making the final I figured that that's what I wanted to do all the time.

"From there, Shapers Fins picked me up, and I'm still with them now, and I reckon they were so annoyed because I bugged them so much, calling them up and going around to the factory, pestering them about new gear, just full grom froth. Then when I was 15, O'Neill came along, and that opened up a lot of opportunities for me.

"That gave me confidence. I remember when I was younger going up against kids with stickers on

their boards and going, That guy must be good, and then I got some sponsors and it was like, Wow, I've got something there, and that gave me the extra confidence, y'know?

"I finished school last year, and that was something that was important to me. I mean, I don't want to go to uni now, but in five years that might be something to fall back on. I don't know what I'd like to study, but maybe I'd like to study something. A few of my mates have started degrees this year and already dropped out because they weren't sure of what they wanted to do."

FAST FORWARD TO THE PART WHERE WE TRY AND GET SHELBY TO THANK SURFING LIFE FOR HIS FLEDGLING PRO SURFING CAREER BY GETTING HIM ON LAST YEAR'S HOT 100...

"I always knew the Hot 100 was out there, but I thought that it was something that was pretty difficult to get into. I always thought it was under 20s, and I was expecting to see guys like Owen in there; I know they're older now, but you know what I mean. But last year Shieldsy started calling me up to go and shoot, and we were going up to Straddie one time and he was asking me whether I was ready to go on a trip or whatever, and I had no idea what he was on about, and then next thing I knew you asked me to be on the trip.

"After last year's Hot 100 I got so much more confidence, because I got back and everybody was asking me what it was like to be on the Hot 100, and it sunk in what I'd done. I mean, out there we were just surfing and trying to get clips and shots, and then back at school everyone was like, How was the trip?, and I was like, Yeah, we scored; it was one of the best trips ever. It dawned on me then that it was something pretty prestigious.

"After that trip Oakley picked me up and that's changed my life completely. I don't have to work at all, I can just surf and concentrate on my surfing, and I'm getting better at surfing because I'm out there every day."

Look at those Mick Fanning arms, but above the lip! The new Snapper generation are taking from the old and putting it in the sky.



Spinning at the speed of death to Shelbyville.



SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW, HELL-DON?

"I did the juniors this year and did pretty well, so next year I'll get on the QS and climb the ranks and be able to compete in the Primes in 2017, then the year after hopefully make the Tour when I'm 21. It's weird, because the Brazilians seem to be getting on at 17-18, but the Aussies don't do it until they're 23 or something.

"I wouldn't want to make the CT next year, because I still have a lot of growing to do in my surfing and physically. I'm pretty small, and if I went up against Mick he'd have such an advantage over me. It's a big thing to know that you're ready for the Tour when you make it, not just scraping through, but there to make a big impact."

AND SURFING IN GENERAL?

"In the last three years, airs have gone through the roof; I mean, airs progress so much, but rail surfing will never die. If someone can ride a wave like Mick and link a bunch of carves with finners it just looks so nice. I prefer rail surfing to airs; I mean, I like seeing guys like Filipe or John boost, but I want to see them land clean and go into a carve. But I can't see smooth, precise surfing, like Mick, or Joel or Kelly, ever getting old.

"When I'm at home training we have a day for gymnastics, so we have a tramp and some mattresses, and run up and hit the tramp and do

whatever we want and land on the mattresses. At the moment I've been trying backflips, and whatever I've been doing in the water that I haven't quite got yet. I've come close to landing flips in the water. I see air surfing going that way; variations on the air reverse where we're doing more inverted spins."

AND NOW WE GIVE HIM THE EASIEST JOB IN THE WORLD – TO PUT TOGETHER HIS OWN PERSONAL CT DREAM TEAM, MADE UP OF 10 GUYS ON TOUR NOW, AND FIVE WHO HE'D LIKE TO SEE.

"My Tour dream team would be Mick, Joel, John, ummm.... I'd say Filipe, even though I don't like him too much, he's still a freak, he just does the same thing a bit, that big air reverse.... Ummm, even though I don't want him on Tour anymore I'd have to say Kelly, because he's a freak.... Ummmm (long pause), Durbo. How many is that? Six? Ahhhh, the Aussie goofyfooter, sayyyyyy, how many more? Four more? Do they have to be from the present? Julian, yeah Julian, Owen, I'll say Jordy. One more? I'll say Banting, because in the next five years he'll get so much better.

"Ahhhh, OK. Koa Rothman, the guy who charges, not for small waves, but for waves like Chopes, to make it interesting. Ummm, Dane, because everyone loves watching Dane, but five-years-ago Dane. Ummmmm, maybe Jay Phillips, I think

he'd go pretty well. How many more, three? Two? Maybe, ahhhh, no. Ummmmm, shit I don't know, how many more? Two? There aren't really any surfers who I really like who aren't on Tour, let's wrap it at three, huh?"

SEEING HOW HARD HE BLEW THAT, WE THOUGHT WE'D WIND IT UP WITH THREE THINGS THAT HE HATES.

"Three things I hate? That's easy. People who travel to other breaks and think they're locals there; like, I was just in the Philippines and there were guys there who spoke in a really annoying tone, if you get my drift, who were from another country and who just thought they owned the place. People that snake, apart from me, and old guys that think that young guys shouldn't get waves."

That last bit sounded like a jibe directed at SL's editorial staff getting the shits with Sheldon's wave count. Whatever; he's a cheeky grom with the world at his feet, one of the best young surfers in Australia, a force to be reckoned with at Snapper, as nice as they come, handsome (according to Mimi), friendly, from a great and supportive family, with big-brand backing... Oh boy, Shell-necklace has it all at his feet, and it's all thanks to the wonderful staff at Surfing Life and their decision to include the kid in our Hot 100 program... Nah, Shell, this is all you. Good on ya clobber, you deserve it all. 🐢



GENERATION

- S E R I E S -



HAYDENSHPES

futures.

ETHAN EWING

YEEWWWWWWWWING!

WADE DAVIS



On a trip that was choc-loaded with top notch surf names – Kai Hing, Quinn Bruce, Sheldon Simkus, Reef Doig (sorry Riley Laing, it's a strong name, but not weird enough to be surfy) – one name stood above the rest for its sheer shred-dog credentials. His first name wasn't much: Ethan; but it's how his name finished up that really got our barrel bombs blasting: Ewing. Yewing. Yewwwwing. Like Patrick Ewing before him, our Ethan has a long and illustrious future of meme-starring and t-shirt-gracing ahead of him.

That's, of course, when he starts winning World Titles, and we're sure that Ethan Ewing will win World Titles. Then our idea for a t-shirt with his face on it, that says, I'm Ethan Yewwwwing, will make perfect sense and sell like hot cakes. How dare we be so presumptuous as to say that young Ethan will win Titles? Well, despite being one of the younger guys on the trip he surfed with the most style, an AI-esque calmness and aggression, and his repertoire of tricks is already right up there; but more than just having the tricks, he does them with a little bit of je ne sais quoi, a waft of the fins here, a little fins first there, a combo everywhere.

Rail so hard motherlickers want to sponsor me, that turn cray.





To conjure something sick out of nothing is one of Ethan's world-beating attributes. Here he is, popping the tail on a section that prolly deserves a fat back.



Ethan first came really onto my radar earlier this year, when I was running around an unnameable Queensland point on its day of the decade and bumped into Mick Fanning (name drop), who was in town running a grom camp with some sprogly Curl riders, as well as kids on other labels who'd impressed over the course of the Rip Curl Grom Search series. Ethan was one of them. Anyway, I was running around and bumped into a rehydrating Mick, and we were chewing the fat and Ethan caught a wave, and Mick said to me, Have you seen that kid? And I told him that the name was familiar, and Mick said, Mate, he's the real deal.

Yeah, as if an endorsement from the three

(four?) times World Champion, shark beating, all-round good one, Fanno, isn't enough to get you Yewwwwwing! But Eth-dawg remains cool and calm, quiet even, but confident still, like all future champions built under the reign of Fanno should be. He's also bloody elusive, hailing from the very quiet North Stradbroke Island, home to stoic, no nonsense types; the types who just like to surf and fish and surf some more. Ethan Kabloowing is so little nonsense that we couldn't even get a hold of him for an interview and had to do it via Facebook Messenger, like, how perfectly youth-in-2015 is that! So here it is, as it transpired, in all of its uncut glory, the Facebook conversation between me and the

guy whose face you're going to have on the back of your hovercar one day.

SURFING LIFE: All right. Let's get some meat. Tell us about your life growing up on Straddie.

Ethan Ewing: I think it's one of the best places to grow up. There isn't too much to do other than surf, so that's all I did with my family and friends growing up – just surfing every day, after school and all day on the holidays, just practising. Everybody on the island is always so interested in when my next comp is and they are really supportive – even while I'm away they ask me how I'm going, it's amazing, and right now I love it. I get so excited to get back



there after a trip.

SL: Sick, so how old were you when you started surfing?

EE: Four years old.

SL: So your parents were surfers? How much influence did they have on your surfing?

EE: Yeah, my parents are both surfers. My mum won the Rip Curl Pro at Bells and me and Dad go down the beach and surf by ourselves all the time, so it's great! My dad and brothers have helped me so much, they've been taking me to comps since I was about eight, and my dad has spent a huge amount of time on the beach filming and supporting me; he's very supportive and a great mentor.

SL: How much contact have you had with the older Straddie pros?

EE: I always talk to Bede when he's on the island; he's one of the nicest guys I have ever met, always interested in my comps. Tim MacDonald and I are really close, we do a few training sessions together and I sometimes go down to the HPC where he works and trains. It's good to get off the island and watch other surfers down on the Goldy – it motivates me to train harder and get better.

SL: So do you think that you have to get off the island to make it as a pro surfer?

EE: I don't think I will have to move off the island to make it, but definitely spend a lot of time on the

Gold Coast. Time will tell, though.

SL: Would you like to live on the island forever?

EE: Yeah, for sure.

SL: What do you love about it so much? What are your favourite things about your home?

EE: I love how supportive the community is. You only surf with people that you know, nobody else... it's pretty crazy! And when you come back from a comp and see everybody, and they ask you how you went.

SL: Sharky?

EE: I don't find it that sharky... there are definitely times when it's spooky, but I just pick smart times to go surfing if I'm going by myself, or with only a few

Everyone goes on about 12 o'clock turns, but keep your eyes peeled for six o'clock turns – they are the future (by six hours).

people. I find Lennox or WA a lot scarier.

SL: Are there enough crew out there to have a good bunch of mates?

EE: Yeah, there aren't too many kids around my age, so I mainly hang out with my brothers' friends and people that are a few years older than me.

SL: Where's your surfing career at right now? What have you done this year?

EE: This year I am just focusing on the pro juniors and the small QS's. I won my first pro junior this year and got second to Taj [Burrow] in my first QS in Bali. I also won my fourth state title and got a chance to surf in the Quik Pro trials again.

SL: And in the future? When do you want to make the Tour?

EE: Next year I'm focusing on the pro juniors, as it is my last year, and also the QS's. I want to make the Tour by the time I'm 20, but as long as I keep improving with my surfing and getting good results then I'm happy.

SL: What do you think good surfing will look like when you're 20?

EE: I think there will be crazier combos and bigger airs, but still good rail game.

SL: And who do you want to compete against when you're on Tour?

EE: I hope I get to surf against Mick and Kelly.

SL: Whose surfing do you look up to, on and off Tour? And what is it about their surfing that you like?

EE: I look up to my brothers' surfing; they have both influenced me so much. Only really my brothers and a few other people on the island push my surfing, so I can't thank them enough for that. My favourite surfer is Andy Irons. I love how creative he was on a wave – you never knew what he was going to do, and also his style and how fluid and fast he went.

SL: A lot of the guys said that you surf like Andy, have you heard that before? How does hearing stuff like that make you feel?

EE: Yeah, a few people have said that. It definitely feels really good, because that's who I want to look like when I surf, but when I watch myself on footage I can't see it, really.

SL: What are you scared of?

EE: I'm scared of getting old.

Ethan may be a lad of few words, but at 17 years old, did you have much to say? And, really, his surfing by far and away does all the talking for him. The comparisons to Andy Irons are spot on, the praise from Mick deserved, and our claim that he'll be a world-beater reasonable. Ethan Ewing is a quiet kid from a small island with a loud future in the big world to look forward to. Remember the name.



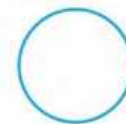
ETHAN

KS - KOMUNITY SERIES NAKED

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4D-FLEX MOULD

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This turn never gets old – just like Riley, who will always be the grom of every trip he goes on.



RILEY

LAING

THERE'S ALWAYS ONE...



RYAN JONES

Grom, that is. On every trip. Even on a trip filled with actual groms, there's always one guy that's designated as THE grom. He might be younger than everyone else. He might froth out harder than everyone else. He might be more enthusiastic, more involved, more eager, more animated than everyone else. He might be all of the above. In the case of this trip, he was. 2015 Hot 100's grom was Riley Laing.

The youngest member of the Hot 100 by just less than a month (turning 17 in early October, compared to Ethan Ewing in early September), Riley didn't even want to BE the grom – he was actively trying to offload the title to anyone else but him in the first couple of days of the trip. But so goes the grom rules. What the rest of the team says, goes, grom! And, as is Riley's personality, he embraced what was thrust upon him and made the most of it and then some.

"Yeah, I was the grom of the trip! Even though I was trying to make everyone else be the grom, I was the grom! I couldn't escape it. It's usually the norm for me to travel and hang out with a lot of older guys. Plus, I have travelled a lot by myself, too. So I have kind of learnt how to deal with travel and situations on my own or by myself, despite my age. When I go away on a trip with other, older guys they always think I am a bit older than what I actually am, which is pretty cool. But a lot of the time it's hard to escape being designated as 'the grom', just like on this trip."

Joe Van Dijk's face full of frost



Hailing from North Entrance on the New South Wales Central Coast, Riley is part of a family who spends their life in and around the water, with a father and brothers who all surf and are strong fixtures in the local surf club scene. It's a relaxed, idyllic little part of the coast that's filled with beachies, reefs and bombies – not too busy and not too crowded – but close to a major populous if you feel the need. It's this positive and supportive environment that has fostered a happy-go-lucky demeanor in Riley. It doesn't take a long time travelling with Riley in your clique to realise he's an upper, not a downer. Whatever situation is presented to Riley, neutral or negative, he'll spin it around to be a positive, or else, and that rubs off on the rest of the group. Being deemed 'the grom',

or affronted with poor surf conditions, or snapping multiple boards in one day – all experienced on this trip – it's no skin off Riley's freckled nose. Far from it. It's just another opportunity to look on the bright side of things. This makes Riley quite the pleasure to have on board for a trip of any nature.

"My dad has always been in the water – he was into nippers when he was my age, so my whole family went down that path, too. I didn't really start surfing till I was about 10, but I fell in love with it straight away. Surfing, just to surf, and having fun with it, is what motivates me to keep surfing. That's what it's all about. Enjoyment. When the big days came on this trip, I was revving everyone up so we could go and get barrelled! Maybe I was overfrothing here and there, but that's what I do. I want

to be getting waves, and if people are lagging and I want to get moving, I'll tell 'em. We didn't get as much swell as we could have, but we nailed it, I reckon! When I see big waves I want to get out there straight away and make the most of it. Swells don't last forever!"

Having not met Riley before this Hot 100 trip, that was actually the kind of attitude I was expecting from him when it came to waves, and big ones in particular. Many of you reading this, until now, will only have one really strong memory of Riley in your surfing life: that of a scrawny, blond 13-year-old, piloting a bright red tow-board over the ledge at Shipstern Bluff and getting more barrelled than any sane 13-year-old should. Sure, I was expecting a game in big waves, and I was hoping it was



Riley's renowned for big waves, but in small waves he can also do fun things, like this air and other fun things too.



RILEY

solid for at least a big chunk of this trip for Riley's purposes alone, but I didn't know, or expect, that Riley would have a small-wave game – and, FYI, he most definitely does. It's a side of his surfing he's been trying to show off ever since his first session at Shippies.

"That trip to Shipsterns was amazing. I remember my dad calling me when I was at school and asking me, Are you sure you want to go? I said yes, and he said, Well, I'm in the school office, right now, sorting it out. Grab your stuff; you've got to fly out in four hours! It was surreal that it was all happening so fast. Not getting hurt and getting a couple of big barrels... it was a sick experience. But after that I kind of got the name as a bit of a young, big-wave surfer. That's a bit off track, I think. I don't want to

be pigeonholed as a 'big-wave guy' and I definitely don't think I am a one-trick pony. I see it like this: if I am around big waves, or if I am on a trip and it gets big, I want to be able to surf them, no matter what. If it's small, I want to be able to go out and do airs and impress my mates and put out clips. If I'm at a comp, I want to be able to win heats and get results. That's kind of my job if I want to be a surfer. I want it all and I want to be able to do it all!"

Although Riley doesn't want to be seen as a 'big-wave guy', his experience in local waves of consequence, and cadetship under respected, and reasonably loony, guys from that region, like Justen 'Jughead' Allport and Robert Coote, means that he's got the skills, familiarity and, well, giant balls to paddle over the ledge of any damn wave he pleases. Having no fear, or, to be more accurate, to have the skills and experience to manage his fear and get himself out of heavy situations in heavy water, is impressive for anyone, let alone someone at 17 years of age. Surfing Life will respect his wishes to not be labelled as a 'big-wave guy', and after seeing him in small waves; we understand his qualms with the label. But, goddamn, when it gets big, he's hungry, he'll chase it and he'll go – he was always the first guy in the line-up at big Lance's Right, often taking off on unmakeable ones

(just in case, y'know), and he eventually left early to chase the Swell Of The Century with a team of much older and much more experienced surfers, because he knew it would be valuable for him in one way or another.

"That BIG swell was due right at the end of our trip. So I was trying to get to Nias to catch the swell. I had to leave two days early, spend a night in transit in Padang, then another flight to Nias and a six-hour drive to get there, and when I did, we were worried it wasn't going to be as big as forecast; it wasn't really hitting when it was supposed to. But we woke up the next morning and it was six- to 10-foot and pretty pumping. We scored. It wasn't as big as we were hoping, but it was really good. We went around the corner to surf that other wave; the tide was a bit high and the wind was a bit funny, so it was sketchy, but Lagundri was as good as it gets. Rasta was the man out there, he would sit and wait for like an hour and just pick off the best wave of the best set. Patience paid off. He taught me that out there, for sure."

One of the joys of spending an extended amount of time in the jungle with young, budding professional surfers is having enough time and space to figure out how and why they tick. For someone who grew up only an hour up the coast



When we saw this we were like, Oh god, no Riley, please Riley, oh boy.

from Riley, I got to wondering as to how and why someone who grew up surfing pretty similar waves and swells to me would get turned onto solid waves so much easier, as well as having a far better skillset and mindset to tackle them. The answer?

"Riding motorbikes! Our family was into bikes super heavily at a young age. We had a farm up in Port Macquarie and we were really into it. My whole family, before we loaded up the car with surfboards and travelled the country, we would load up the trailer with motorbikes and do that instead, going to all the tracks and meets – state and Aussie titles – we were super competitive, in the top five in every race and stuff. But then I had a really bad accident on the bike; I nearly broke both my femurs and it kind of scared me away from the bike. Not long after that we went on holidays to Scotts Head and I got a few waves, and that's when it kind of turned and I made the call to focus on surfing. Dad was cool with it, he didn't mind, the water is a lot safer! But I definitely think that motorbikes gave me a lot of confidence and guts to tackle heavy situations that involve serious danger. Getting into surfing it was kind of like, Hell, nothing can hurt

me! But I guess, now that I have progressed and am surfing big waves on shallow reefs... it can be just as dangerous!"

With risk, however, comes reward. In Riley's case, the reward is recognition as one of 'the guys' in heavy water, not only for his age group, but also in any age group. This recognition has provided him with a platform to develop his entire surfing game, in good waves, with older and more experienced peers, and as his surfing becomes more complete, and he becomes of age, the greater the rewards will be.

"I was stoked to be involved in the Hot 100 this year. I had actually never been to the Mentawais before, so I was stoked to get a good day at Lance's Right. I was the first one off the boat to test it out, and it just kept getting better and better, that one afternoon. I was so stoked. I remember watching all the Hot 100 movies when I was a grom. It was so sick to be on one. I couldn't believe it, really. I was kind of in shock. On the trip, I just kept thinking about who I used to look up to and who I want to be like in the future, guys like Jack Freestone, and it's so weird to think that groms might be looking

up to me, and the other guys on the trip, just like we looked up to them."

It's not only groms that look up to you, Riley. I speak for all of us giant pussies out there when I say that we'd kill to have just half of your heavy water skills and confidence, not to mention your rail game or skills in the air, or the opportunities afforded to you over the next few months.

"Yeah, I'm about to go to Hawaii for six weeks, doing the Triple Crown leg and staying on after to get some waves. Then I am going to do the five QS events in Australia in the early part of next year, and then go back to Hawaii for the two pro juniors. To potentially get Pipe pumping with only a couple of other guys in the water is too big an opportunity to miss! Hopefully throw some Shippies swells in there and maybe an Indo jaunt or two to some secret spots, and that's pretty much it!"

We're pretty stoked you're not rocking Metal Mulisha flatbrims, baggy Dickies and listening to nu-metal while building dirt down-ramps in your backyard, Riley. Keep up the good work, grom. 🐻

RILEY



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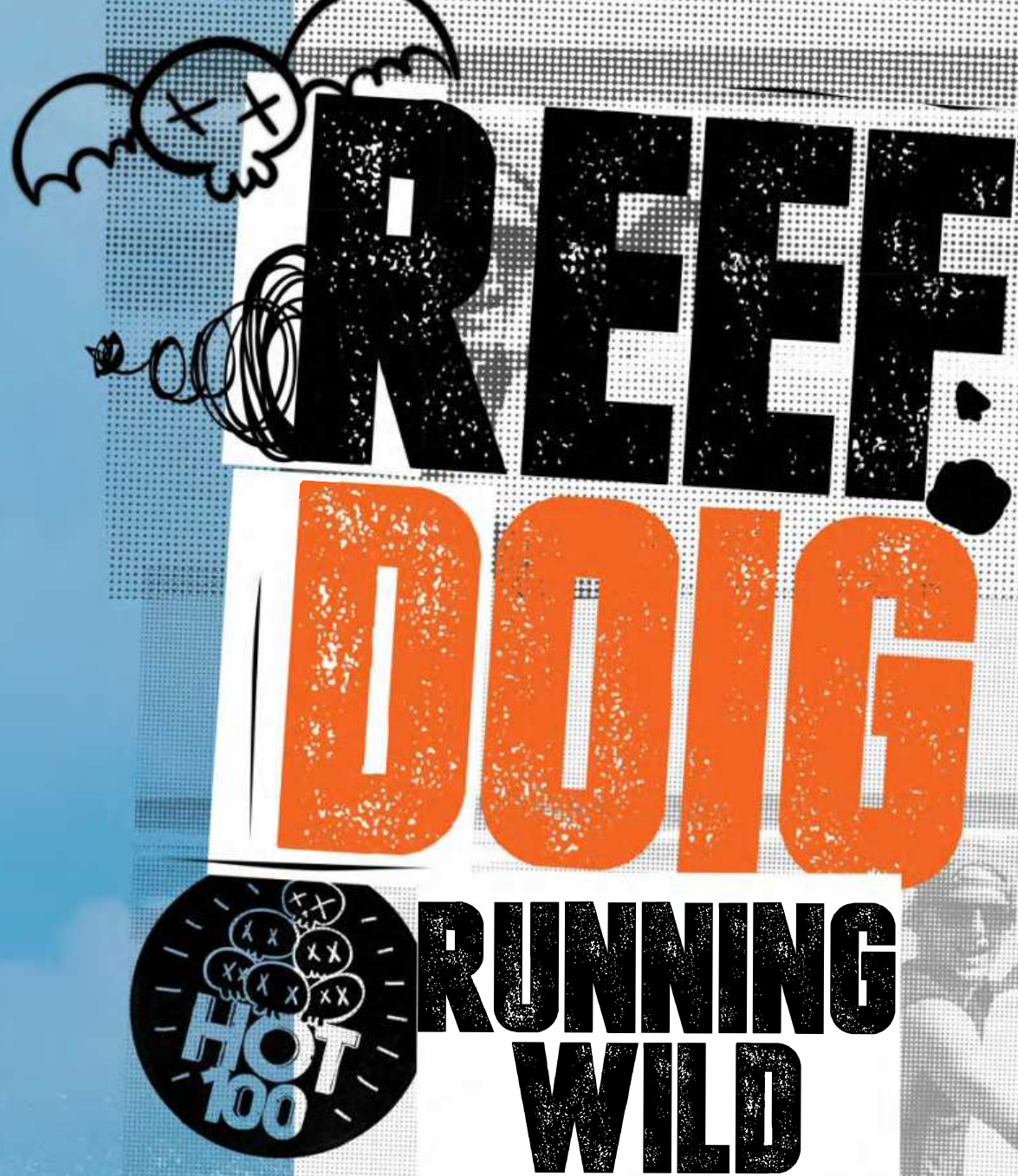


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uni
MITSUBISHI PENCIL

Reef definitely called his girlfriend and told her about stomping this monster.





REEF DOIG RUNNING WILD

WADE DAVIS

In an age of high performance centres and super coaches and protein shakes sometimes we forget the savage nature of surfing. Professionalism in surfing is a relatively new concept for a sport largely born out of antiestablishmentarianism, a diversion from hard work, a radical reaction to rules; now it's all core training, balanced dieting and heat strategy. Certain surfers showed us the virtues of hard work, how application and effort can earn success, but I hate hard work! But I still want success! Isn't hard work antithetical to hot dog surfing? I believe so, and so do some of the surfers often considered the best in the world, like John John now and Dane before. Are we on the verge of losing surfing's savage soul?

There's a side to great surfing that requires a zen-like innate sense of what you're doing, and living and breathing the wild side of the surfing life fosters that. Anybody who wants to be truly great at surfing needs to go savage. They have to surf whenever they can, when it's at its wildest, and tamest, living near the sea, and waking up with the sound of waves crashing being the impetus to get you out of your *Transformers*-sheeted single bed and into the water.



Reef knows that when the fins are free
the funs will follow.



This isn't to say someone renowned for their work ethic, like Mick, didn't have all of this influencing his surfing life – he definitely did – but he supplemented it with hard work, whereas lazy bastards like me want the glory without the extra effort, like John. I want to be John. These days, however, with the exception of a few freaks, natural talent has to be combined with a wild, savage surfing background, and then that, to go to the next level, has to be combined with some modicum of hard work. There is no longer an either either, it's all or nothing.

But what's this got to do with Reef Doig, up-and-coming junior surfer? Well Doigy, born in Australia, spent his formative years running wild on the island of Bali, surfing with his mates, sneaking out at night, getting totally tubed over crystalline coral reefs while his peers tapped out three to the beach in bluebottle-strewn beachies.

But now Reef is back in Oz and he's giving it a red-hot crack. There is no story in Australian junior surfing more interesting than Doigy's, so we'd best give the wild boy the floor, starting, where it often starts, with his old man.

"He helps me with everything. He split up with my mum when she left us, and he was raising three of us kids. We didn't know about it at the time, how hard it was, it was so hard for him to help three kids by himself. That's when he decided, *Hey, we're moving to Bali*. You can get people to help you out over there, it's easier and everything is so mellow. So he took us over there. We were super young and I just remember surfing little foamies on the shorebreak, him teaching us all the techniques.

"Dad would always take us surfing, always helped us out with everything. When I turned about 16 I decided to come over to Oz, and he told me, *You've got a year off school to go overseas and see how you go in the younger division, and*

*have a crack at that. So I decided to come over to the Gold Coast for the Occy (grom comp) and did really well; I ended up winning that event. That's when I was like, *Hey look, Dad, I can take on these kids here. So I want to move over here and finish my education*. I just knew Bali didn't have a future for me, it was just too much fun over there. No rules; you can do whatever you want.*

"Over there we had total freedom to do whatever we wanted to do. You've got your motorbike out front, you're about 13 years old and you can get on your motorbike and get out of the house. You don't really tell anyone, you just go run wild. Do whatever you want.

"Dad was always there saying, *What are you doing sneaking out of the house?*, saying all these things like, *You're grounded*, or whatever. Then he came to a point where he was like, *I give up!* You can't stop kids from doing what they want to do in Bali, they just go wild and do their own thing. And they don't listen, they just find out for themselves.

"Yeah, there was a lot of advice like, *Hey, don't go near these people, and don't be taking this kind of stuff*. Parents do trip out about their kids, they get really worried. Especially us going out, we used to sneak out when we were 13 at midnight, get on our bikes and go to the highway and race. Race proper, like little Indos and stuff. Get on the bike at 12 at night and there is no one on the highway, and race without helmets and seriously do whatever."

But running wild and living savage can only last for so long, and while providing a good, traditional, honest surfing base, the fact of the matter is that in 2015 surfing's a professional sport worth big bucks, and as such requires a concerted professional level if anyone's going to take it all the way. Also, if surfing doesn't work, being a street racing Bali savage isn't going to be a viable alternative for Reef's future.



Reef's got an American accent and is thus a big fan rap and wraps.

REEF

"I moved over here for a reason, and that was to finish my education and further my surfing. When I first moved over I learnt so much; coming out of Bali I didn't know anything. Rock up here, it's been a year now, and I've learnt so much. In Bali you get very street smart; I come here and meet heaps of new people and I feel heaps smarter than what I was.

"I reckon my surfing is getting a lot stronger since I've been here. It's good, because you go half an hour up the road to Snapper and you're surfing with Mick and Joel; you see them down the line and you just want to tear the thing out of it. It pushes you so much. And a lot of kids around you are doing the same thing, so you're pushing them and they're pushing you. It's got to have a bit of that.

"In Bali, a lot of the guys who I looked up to, like Marlon [Gerber] and Lee [Wilson], I just feel like they want to hang out in perfect waves, they don't want to go overseas and spend, like, four grand to surf a one-foot, onshore wave that they are just going to get negged out on. They're just going to get angry about it, and I reckon they just want to stay home and surf perfect waves. Because they know they're gonna get waves, and overseas is just a battle.

"In Australia there is a lot more money in the surf industry than there is in Bali. There are a lot of kids that I grew up surfing with over there that I told, *Hey, you need to get out of Bali. You need to get out and do some comps overseas, and have a good crack at it.* Because if you stay in Bali you're

just going to be around the same people that ask you, *Hey man, what are you doing tonight? Let's go out.*

"And that's how it consistently goes, because that's what happened to me. And I was just going out every night, didn't care. I thought, *Surf, sleep and go party.* And I was so young at the time, I was like, *What am I doing? Shit's not good.* So I moved over here and it's so much better. I tell the boys back home, *Come over and stay with me. Do this comp, do that, just get overseas. Don't stay in Bali.* But Bali will always be home for me. And I respect everyone there, the whole culture, and everything. But I think if you really want to have a good dig at it, for surfing, you've gotta get out of there."

One of the immediate upswings of moving back Down Under was Doigy's coming to SL's attention and resultant inclusion in this year's prestigious Hot 100, a program that some people say is more important than winning world titles.

"The trip was sick, I had fun. Everyone's trying to get the clip, get the shot, and we're all looking back at every wave like, *Ahhh fuck, that might be the shot, or the cover. It psyches you up, and you're like, Ohhh this next one's mine, I'm going to try and do whatever I can to get the shot.* Just push each other, as you do, and that's what I really liked about it. At the end of the day everyone got good waves, it was sick.

"On Tour everything's happening this year. Turns are getting more powerful, airs are getting higher and barrels are getting bigger. In another few years, every kid knows how to do a backflip

on a board. Everyone is just pushing the limits and doing crazy stuff. Sheldon was already doing backflips on the trip, he's already having a crack at it and nearly pulling them off. It's just crazy; I think the future for Australian junior surfing is going really good, it's going ham.

"This is my last year on the junior series and unfortunately I didn't do too well at the start of the year; this was my first time going away and competing. And the thing I learnt from all of that was it's just so hard to keep your mindset. Like, I need to wake up in the morning [to compete] instead of going off with friends and mucking about. I just learnt that if you're going to go there, you need to put your head down. You're going for one reason and one reason only, that's to win. Not to screw around with your buddies. Even eating; eating the right food and keeping hydrated. I just learnt a lot of lessons."

So, there you have it, kidlets. The key to Hot 100 glory is to run wild in your youth, build an anarchic base to your surfing and personality, and then come home and hone it with some hard work and knuckling down. Or just do it your own way, whatever floats your mini mal. But however you walk down the path of your surfing life, there's one thing that's for sure – Reef Doig had one helluva good time growing up in Bali, and now that he's starting to hit his surfing high notes, the good times ain't going to slow down. And he has the best name in surfing, in all of surfing. Reef. Doig. Howl at the moon, Reef Doig. 🐺



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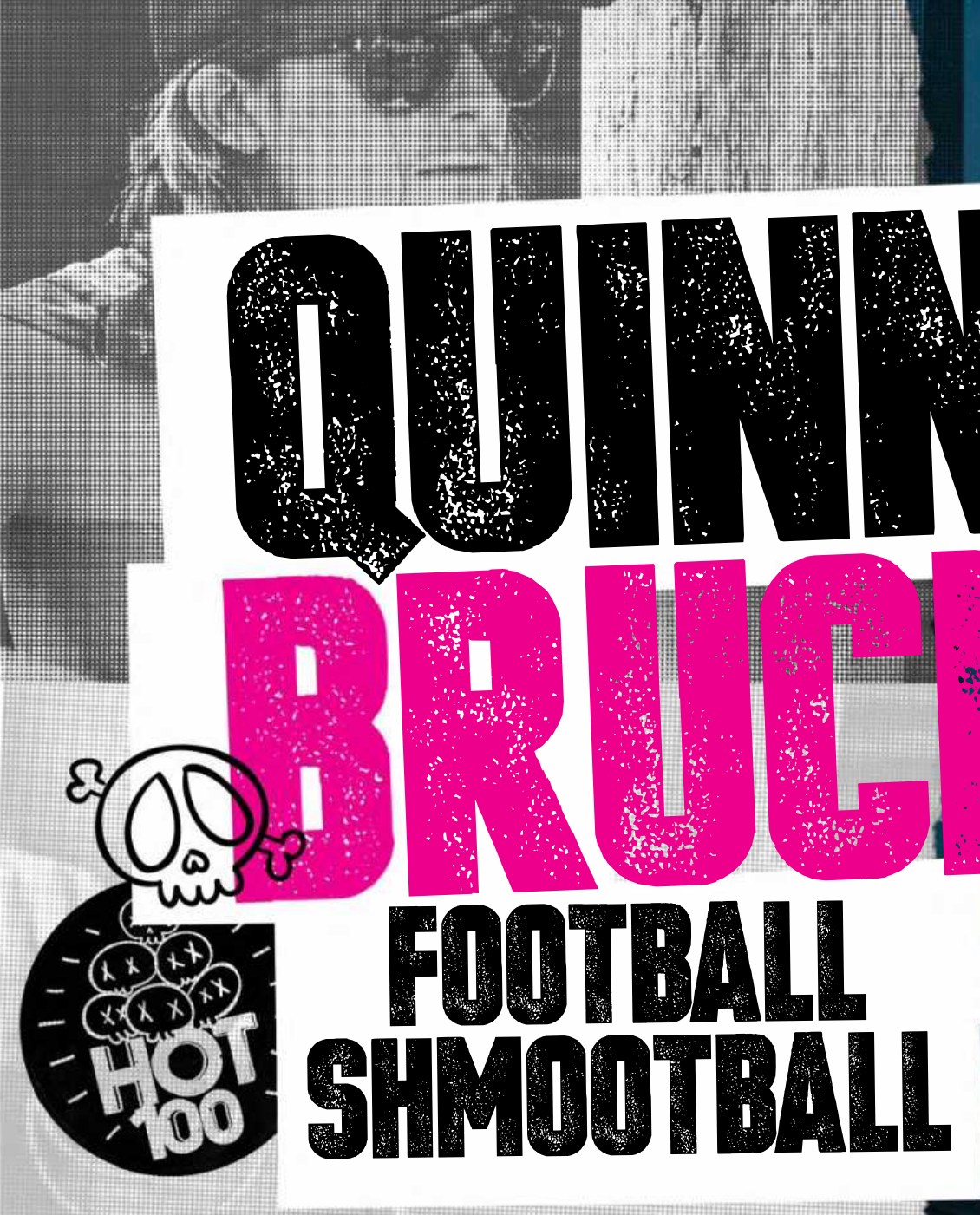


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QUINN BRUCE

FOOTBALL SHMOOTBALL



RYAN JONES

Stealing away talented children from Australian surfing families for two weeks, in their last, crucial months of schooling no less, and ferrying them off to far-flung locales, filled with poisonous wildlife, dangerous ocean crossings, sharp reefs and heavy waves, and then encouraging them to do progressive manoeuvres over said sharp reefs and heavy waves, thousands of kilometres from the safety of a Western hospital, isn't exactly a seamless or relaxing process. Parents, siblings, sponsors, management... they're at home, hoping for the best, but with the knowledge that if anything goes wrong they have a scapegoat, a target... Us! Crikey. There's a bit of pressure, to say the least.

After a dislocated shoulder for Jackson Coffey on last year's edition, and a stomach-parasite-induced near-death for Kalani David the year prior, we were desperately hoping that the whole 'bad luck comes in threes' curse was a load of shit.

So it was with furrowed brows and chewed fingernails that Surfing Life sat on a Mentawaiian beach, worried and anxious, unable to focus on the perfect little runners at Lance's Left, awaiting the arrival of 17-year-old Quinn Bruce. He was late – over an hour or more – on his boat ride down the coast from Tua Pejat.

I sometimes feel like Quinn Bruce's name would make more sense the other way around, Bruce Quinn. Bruce Quinn doesn't surf, but he has a car dealership and coaches the Nerang Nuggets U12s rugby league team.





Quinn Boost. High five!

Y'see, Quinn was the odd one out on this trip, arriving two days after everyone else. While the rest of the gang were getting stuck into the first couple of days of waves on this year's Hot 100, Quinn was wrapping up a boat trip with another magazine. They were in a pretty similar area toward the end of their trip, but it wasn't close enough for a nice, handy drop-off at our door. Poor Quinn had to motor back to Padang overnight, where he was to be collected the following morning at 5am and driven back to the fast ferry to make a four-hour Mentawai Strait crossing. He was due to arrive in Tua Pejat just in time to board a slow-moving dugout for the two-hour journey down to Katiet. The rest of the groms had commandeered Kingfisher's speedboat for a wave-hunting mission, leaving the weary traveller with the slow option for the final leg of his journey.

So there we were, almost an hour after Quinn was due into our lodgings at Kingfisher Bay, thinking that our Hot 100 curse was set to continue. Maybe

he missed the fast ferry in Padang? Maybe he couldn't find the porter at the harbour? Perhaps the dugout has flipped? I wonder what's for lunch?

But, then, on the horizon... a five-panel Volcom cap, pulled down low, covering a water-logged, sunburnt, squinting teenager slumped over in a dugout canoe powered by nary more than a lawnmower engine. Ten minutes later, with a crunch of coral and sand on hull, some handshakes and high-fives, and Quinn Bruce was on the Hot 100 trip. Finally. The curse was broken!

It had been a bit of an arduous journey for 17-year-old Quinn, to say the least, but he was here, he was surf-fit, acclimatised to the tropics and hungry to back up a strong performance on another magazine trip with an even stronger one on the Hot 100.

"It meant heaps to be invited along on the Hot 100 trip. I've been watching them all since I was little and it was always all the best guys being invited along, and they were always the best movies that

you wanted to watch. When I heard I was coming along I was stoked. It was the best feeling ever. It's weird, it went that quick; just four years ago I was watching the trips, and now I'm on one of them. It's pretty crazy. When it was all wrapped up I had been in Indo for about a month. A boat for two weeks at the start and then two weeks in a land camp; I was definitely feeling like a salty sea-dog! Just surfing every day, either in the water or the sun or both. I was pretty buggered by the end of it all, and I was pretty ready to get home! But after the first week at home and being back at school I wanted to go straight back. Surfing every day is the best thing."

While Surfing Life would have loved for Quinn to be with us from the start, it didn't impact his performance on the trip or presence within the magazine of the movie on the front cover. If anything, he arrived fired up and ready to go, only taking one session to show us that he's no stranger to arriving late and making a noise; he did it on this trip and he's been doing it all of his surfing life.



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Quinn Blast. Handshake?



"I guess I started surfing a little later than other guys my age. I was maybe around 10 years old or a little older. I played Aussie Rules when I was younger, and did both for a couple of years – I reckon if I wasn't a surfer I would still be playing Aussie Rules; Dad and I always still get into it a lot and watch all the Suns games – but when I was around 12 I gave up footy and started focusing on surfing. My brother and my dad have always surfed, and they got me into it. When I was 11 or 12 I started to do the comps and getting into that side of surfing. We actually lived in Noosa until I was about 13, and I was just surfing one-foot slop every day. It sucked. School options were way better down on the Gold Coast and my dad knew I would get way better waves, so we made the move down and haven't looked back. The waves are way better and we get to surf four times a week for school (through Palm Beach Currumbin's Sports Excellence Program). Ever since we moved down to the Gold Coast I think that has helped my surfing heaps."

For a junior surfer who, self-admittedly, came to the sport a little later than normal when compared to his peers, he hasn't wasted any time in gaining recognition and lining the mantelpiece with junior surfing accolades. Surfing Life first saw Quinn in action at the 2014 Billabong Occy's Grom Comp at his, now, homebreak of Dbah. He systematically dismantled the entire under-16 draw card with a combination of turns and airs far beyond his years, and beyond the reach of his competition. We were more than impressed, and knew it was only a matter of time until he was coming away with us on a Hot 100 trip. But although he has the competition results to back it up, Quinn doesn't want to be seen as the 'comp guy'. At least not totally, or not just yet.

"From being involved in boardriders' clubs at a young age you kind of get thrust straight into the comp side of things, and it's always been guys like Julian and Mick and Parko that I look up to; the guys that grew up in Queensland and have made it via the comp route. Dean Brady as well,

who I looked up to when I was in Noosa, and got me into it all. But as you grow older and see all the paths and options available to surfers, there's definitely more of a mix of guys that you look up to. The tour guys that travel and surf and dominate in the comps are always a big inspiration, but it's hard to ignore the freesurf guys when they drop a huge clip and [you see] the stuff they're pulling. But to just be able to surf and travel, no matter what exact path you're on, is pretty much everyone's dream in the long run. That's my dream, however I can make it work."

For all the negativity that the grumpy old internet trolls spruik about junior surfers online, and for their reputations as spoilt little punks that have had everything handed to them, Surfing Life, for the most part, have found that this stuff is just not true. Quinn is a prime example of this. He's a quiet, hard worker, with zero ego, and an innate level of respect for both the position he has found himself in, and for the peers that surround him.

Quinn Bottomturn.
Please don't kick me.

QUINN

"Everyone in this age group in Australia is ripping at the moment. Everyone is pretty good mates, too, which is really cool, I think. There's definitely a new guard coming through from different countries around the globe. But, having been at Worlds the last couple of years, I think that Australia still has more surfers coming through of a high quality, and we've got good depth. A lot of our state titles are just as hard, if not harder, to make it through than Worlds! So I think we'll still have some dominance for a little while yet. With regards to this trip, we had a really good crew of guys who are coming into form. Kai is a good bloke that knows how to talk! Ha. And he's been surfing really good all year, better and better, and he was owning the beachie with some crazy punts. Ethan... I thought it was Andy! Ha. He's got the best style ever. He surfs so sick that I get confused; in the water he looks like he's 25! Riley was definitely the grommet of the trip but he's got some big go-nads on him, that's for sure; he has a real dig! Sheldon surfs really well and always has good flow in the water, and he spends a lot of time out at Snapper, so he knows how to get his snake on! Ha. Reef's older than me but is a year below me at school, because he transferred over here from Bali, but I've known him since he lived over there, and he's a legend! He surfs really well and he's got a hell gaff on him! It was a good, fun crew."

Having spent his formative surfing and competitive years with Volcom's stone on the beak of his fresh, white Hammos, he has begun to embody the Youth Against Establishment values of his major sponsor. He's True To This. True to

the integrity, authenticity and individuality of his backer and himself. You get the distinct feeling that Quinn would never bow to trends, or do anything just because his peers were doing it. He's his own person and, while guarded, when he comes out of his shell, he's an honest and straight talking grom with a calm head on his shoulders. Traits that can be seen in his regard for the social norms that are abided to by his peers, like social media. For a 17-year-old, his values appear to be in the right place.

"Social media is, like, the biggest thing at the moment, I think, being a young surfer. It's weird, I'm actually not super into it... I actually don't even own a phone at the moment! I haven't for a couple of weeks, ha! Surfing in general, but in particular, surfers, have gotten way bigger a profile because of Instagram and how easy it is to connect personally with followers, etc. It's definitely a huge part of it all now, and if your following helps those brands that are looking at you, or supporting you, make the decision to get more behind you, then it's definitely a good thing. But it's always sick being away from it all. I love being able to get away from all that and focus on what's real, like the way we were on this trip. Having no signal. It brings it back to the way it used to be, and the way it should be, I think; just a surf trip with the boys. That's what it's all about."

As we sat in the fast ferry back to Padang, motoring into a sunset over the Mentawai Strait – Quinn's fourth journey across this body of water in a month – it was a pretty apt time for reflection. While Surfing Life were reflecting on how much damn

food we were going to eat at the end of Ramadan banquet at the Padang Mercure, Quinn was slightly more deep than us, which wasn't hard.

"So, this is my last couple of months of school and then I'm done. I'm frothing! I just want to finish school well and just surf as much as possible. I've got Aussie titles coming up and then I'm off to Hawaii for, like, a month. Following that, next year, I am going to do all the Pro Juniors, and now it's shifted to just 18-and-under it will actually be my last year, so it's a pretty big deal. I'll be chasing results in those comps pretty hard, as well as trying to fit a few trips in, and then definitely get back to Hawaii as well. There are heaps of distractions, what, with being nearly 18 and doing the Junior Series and being just about to finish school and all of that. But those distractions are always going to be there, no matter how old you are or who you are, in one form or another. In my mind it's pretty easy to avoid the distractions and stay focused. I would way rather surf for a living than anything else, so when you see Mick and those guys training the absolute house down, 24/7, you can kind of see why it's all worth it. The other stuff will always be there; it's easy to keep motivated to surf and train, it's hard to not want to go surfing."

It's not hard at all to want to go surfing. What's hard is to surf as well as Quinn does, at his age, procuring competition results left, right and centre, whilst still keeping a level head on your shoulders. What's next is up to Quinn. We're just glad we're watching him in the ocean and not at Carrara Stadium with a Suns jumper on. 🐬

A tropical beach scene with several palm trees in the foreground. A person is standing on the beach, holding a surfboard. In the background, there are large, white-capped waves breaking on a sandy shore. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The scene is reflected in a pool of water in the foreground.

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JACOB WILCOX

WELCOME TO THE GOOD LIFE, MR WILCOX LET'S GO ON A LIVING SPREE.

 MIMI LAMONTAGNE

"I was doing all right on the QS at the start of the year," says Jacob Wilcox, who has just managed to find cell service. He's on his way back from a two-week stint up at Gnarlaloo with his dad, surfing, camping, eating and occasionally sleeping. It's his first trip in months.

"Actually, you know what? I wasn't doing all right at all. I was just doing it. I had such a low seed that even though I was getting good heat totals I was almost always knocked out. It was pretty disappointing."

And then, at the height of his frustration, Jacob broke his ankle. Running down the driveway in the rain he slipped in the wash-off, watched his ankle roll over, and a week later was fast asleep on the operating table. "At first I thought I had just rolled it really badly, but after a week of not being able to walk, I knew something else was wrong. I was out of the water for months.

"In a way, hurting myself wasn't good, because it was an injury, and that's never good. But at the same time, it was almost a blessing in disguise because it gave me a break. I got to sit back and look at it all from a different perspective. Seeing if that's [competitive surfing] really what I want to do, and if that's what I want when I get back from injury. And after being able to evaluate that, and decide that it's ACTUALLY what I want, I'm hungrier than ever to do well.

"A lot of people hurt themselves and realise that they don't want to spend so much time away from home, or whatever, but not me. It was doing my head in. For the first week I enjoyed relaxing a bit, but I actually started to go crazy. That's when I started reading Mick's book. I tried to relate to his comeback, and it motivated me hugely. Before I hurt myself I was getting tired from competitions all the time and not ever being at home. It's hard to complain, but I wasn't happy with my life all the time.

And relating to the way Mick took his injury and turned it all around changed my perspective."

In Jacob's eyes, two things set great surfers apart from good surfers: "I think that style is really important, but you've gotta make sure it's a natural style. If you're just copying someone else, people will be able to see through it. That's one thing that can make a surfer great.

"The other, for me, is motivation. That's huge, and I think it's part of the reason why so many Brazilians are doing well."

I asked if he thought that was a problem in Australia's surfing youth. "I wouldn't say it's a problem, but a lot of the Australian junior surfers have had it a lot easier than some of the Brazilian surfers. They've had everything given to them, and they haven't had to work for it as hard. It definitely affects their results, too. You don't just get given a first place trophy – you have to work for it. People aren't used to that over here."

"Do you feel like you've had to work for it?" I asked. "Yeah. I do. There are a lot of good surfers out there and they try hard – I'm not trying to call them lazy or anything like that. But the difference is everywhere – just life in general is easier for Australians, and a lot of them don't appreciate it. Personally, this injury has made me think and appreciate so much more than what I used to. Which is cool, I think, because before then I took it for granted. I didn't realise how good my life was."

And during his months of rehab, he figured out that he'd do anything to keep that going. Sounds all too similar to Mick Fanning's comeback story, if you ask us. And look how that turned out.

In the words of Kanye West, welcome to the good life, [Mr Wilcox], let's go on a living spree. 🐻

For someone who probably hasn't seen one, Jacob does an A+ blow-up doll impersonation. PHOTO: MIKE RILEY

Sid Vicious hair, rockabilly
flair, total Ball tear.
PHOTO: SWILLY



KALANI BALL

by SAM ZUBEVICH

THE ENTERTAINER

Can you imagine the perfect surfer? Most of us would say that Mick Fanning is pretty damn close. But what if you added in a cheeky extra dimension along the lines of your favourite freesurfer?

Kalani Ball is one of many salty young prodigies who looks up to our beloved three-time world-beater, but the difference is, K-Ball has the drive, the vision, and most importantly the talent to truly progress Australian surfing. Just like Mick has. "Fanning is definitely my favourite surfer, but I grew up watching Wade Goodall and those types of guys, so I really admire that type of surfing, too. These days, Chippa, Noa Deane and Creed are doing the craziest stuff, and I really like comps, so I just want to take that kind of approach and try to use it to win some heats!"

And win some heats, he has. Kalani is smack bang in the middle of one of the most important transitions for any young pro surfer, and his approach to surfing contests has already developed into one that will allow him to excel during this next phase of his career – a hungry, transient wilderness that many surfers have affectionately dubbed 'the grind'. Kalani explains: "It's definitely a wild transition from the juniors to the QS. I got a third at the first pro junior, then I kind of just had a shocker the rest of the year, so basically I jumped straight into the QS's. I got a bunch of fifths in a few QS1500s, so it doesn't really scare me too much, 'cause I've kind of done better there than in the juniors this year. I think it pushes you more, 'cause you're not trying to surf safe on the QS – you really need to go for it. That's really the only way to make your heat. I enjoy that more, and all of the QS guys push me to surf better."

"Travelling to Europe for the QS was easily my biggest stint so far – we were almost there for six weeks, so it was pretty crazy! France was super fun, but the waves were so small. It's a really cool place to hang out, though, so I enjoyed it. Spain was next, and we had pretty average waves, but there was a sick little bar next to the comp with bands and stuff, so that was super fun when we weren't competing. I love how there's so many things to do; heaps of quality restaurants and mountains to look out over the towns."

"Morocco was really weird, it was kinda like you can't go out at nighttime where we were. I think it's pretty sketchy 'cause out the back of the area we stayed in had a bunch of slums, so I guess there's some gangsters or whatever, haha. We walked to the main mall and these people were yelling at us at, like, eight o'clock at night, so we were like, Oh, right... and left. The surf was better than Spain and

France, though, even though it was bumpy and kind of weird, there was swell at least. It was four-foot, so it was cool to at least get waves."

Unfortunately, a lot of surf contests are often subjected to small or generally average surf. Particularly the hairy nether-regions of the QS, with their lack of waiting periods and razors (seriously, look at Kolohe Andino's facial hair). But thankfully for Kalani, he's been able to wrangle himself on plenty of trips this year, with the sole focus of getting good waves. "When we went to the Ments, it was crazy. It was such a fun trip, pumping pretty much the whole time, so that's probably my favourite one this year. I did a trip straight after that to New Zealand with Billabong, with Taj, Freestone, Creed and Ryan, and that was epic. The older boys were all going mad. It only went for a week 'cause Ryan and Jack had to bail for Ballito, but Creed and myself hung around surfing waves to ourselves with Sean Kettle, a local kid from New Zealand sponsored by Billabong. It was super fun; we'd just surf all day, then go to the pub for a feed at night. Billabong hooked us up with a crazy place."

"I'm definitely finding myself getting more independent and feeling a bit more mature. With the longer trips I've done more recently, you're kind of doing your own thing the whole time. You've gotta rely on yourself a lot more. When I was younger there'd be people ready to pick me up everywhere and they'd essentially do everything for me. It's good that I started travelling when I was young, so I could learn all of that stuff for now."

With so much travel, it'd be easy for Kalani to be highly strung, or at least be tempted to blow off steam in destructive ways like a lot of other teenagers. Anyone who's met Kalani can instantly see that his personality is the furthest thing from destructive, but regardless, it always helps to have a relaxing home to come back to. Who knows? Maybe Hitler would've just been a tense, racist guy with a shit moustache if he grew up in Stanwell Park – the place sounds that ridiculously idyllic.

"It's surrounded by mountains, so you pretty much drive down a big hill, and it's kind of like a semi-circle that meets the beach. There's only about 400 people here. It's pretty cool; there's just a bunch of my friends and I that surf alongside a few older guys. During the week there's, like, 10 guys out, max. I think it's a bit of an advantage down here, 'cause there's not really any nightclubs or anything. I've just turned 18, and it's not like I'm going out every night of the week like some people would be doing!"

As if that wasn't enough, Kalani's dreamy slice of the South Coast, that served to shape him into

the freakish surfer he is today, is still managing to uncover more and more potential in him by the week. A lot of people feel like certain places are a fast track for their surfing – it's just that for the lucky ones, that place is right at home.

"Yeah, I'd say I improve even more at home, actually, which is pretty sick. I go to a gym in Caringbah now, and I've got a coach, Matt Griggs, who watches me surf twice a week, so if there's anything I need to change he can see that straight away and tell me. He used to coach Mick, and even spent time working with Owen on Tour last year. We've been working together since I was only 12. Besides him, I'd definitely say my parents and my manager Mick Lowe are my biggest supporters. Mick sorts out everything for me, and he's been on the Tour and done it all before, he even won at Snapper, so he really helps me out a lot with knowing what I need to do."

"I've definitely improved in bigger waves in the last year or so – I wasn't as comfortable in solid stuff when I was younger, but now I've got a ski so I can buzz around to any of the waves. There are a lot of local guys down here who have helped me out with that. I really like getting barrelled now! Haha. If there's ever a swell, I try to head down to Ulladulla where Russell Bierke is – he's on another level and definitely makes you want to go on bigger waves. All of the underground guys are super gnarly, but the nicest guys ever, and let you get a few waves when you're around, so it's an awesome training ground. There are always good waves down here and not many people around, so we're pretty lucky in that way."

"I really wanna get into that top 100 on the QS so I can do all the primes and then, especially if I get a few results in the bigger events, it's pretty easy to stay in that top 100 so I don't have to do as many events and can travel a bit more to work on whatever. That way I can go to Chopes or Cloudbreak to try that out, and spend more time in Hawaii with bigger waves to get even more comfortable in that sorta stuff. By the time I get on Tour I want to be super ready for those types of waves, as well as the small ones, 'cause it seems like every year there's a few guys who qualify and don't go too good at those bigger waves. I don't want to be that guy! Haha."

Something (or actually everything) tells us Kalani won't be that guy. Just listen to what his peers or photographers say about him, have your face melted by his clips, or if you're lucky enough, watch him surf in person. All signs point to a future brighter than his hair, and that's brighter than the bloody sun! 🌊



JACKO BAKER

THE BALANCING ACT

SAM ZUBEVICH

It's hard to act like a kid when you have very adult sums of money thrown at you. But if you're one of Australia's most talented young shred-lords, which Jackson Baker most certainly is, then it's a tightrope you're going to have to learn to walk in order to secure a future throwing fibreglass around with your feet. The contests, trips and sponsor obligations make for an interesting cocktail when they're blended among the normal teenage things that have most of us tearing our hair out – kind of like cognac and vermouth, or maybe Powerade and goon. In Jacko's case, however, it's all just a part of his education.

"I only finished school a few weeks ago, which was kind of surreal... Like, 13 years of school, then I'm straight out the window! I haven't really felt it sink in yet, 'cause I haven't been home long enough. Today was a Friday, and it was kind of cruisy, so I haven't thought about it much, but next week I won't have school, so it'll be like, What the hell!? This is heavy! I'll be frothing, though. I'll be able to train way harder and set aside, like, two hours a day to actually go to the gym instead of coming home from school and just surfing or hanging with the boys. Seven days of every week will be geared towards chasing this goal to be the best I can. It's actually gonna be really good. I can't wait to experiment later this year to organise my plans for 2016."

The Philippines weren't Jacko's biggest test this year, though. That honour belonged to somewhere a little further afield – one of the most enjoyable, but also most culturally different places that any Aussie surfer can go. Where, you ask? Europe. Where everyone thinks their particular town is absolutely the finest part of the world. And a lot of the time, especially where surfers tend to go, that's not too far from the truth.

"Going over there, Mum and Dad were kind of freaked out about it 'cause they'd been over there a couple of months before, and some spots were tough to work out even for them, and they're full-blown adults! So I was like, This is going to be gnarly! But I got super lucky. Dean Bowen was on my flight, and him being over 25 helped us get to every event for way cheaper. Instead of getting an under-21s deal and paying, like, 100 Euros a day extra, we just went quarters in a car with him, which was great on a trip like that where you're on a budget. You've really gotta be careful to make sure you're coming home with your prize money, instead of paying it all back to Mum and Dad!

"The first place we went was Lacanau, in France, and it was super fun. The waves weren't amazing, but just the town setup, having heaps of cafés and

good food joints, was sick. We were staying in a backpackers' hostel thing, which was pretty cool 'cause we learned a bit of French. Then there was a sick bakery across the road with coffee and the best food, so we were like, Fuck yeah, we're set! There was a bit of nightlife as well, so the boys had a couple of nights of partying just to experience what it's like overseas.

"Eventually we ended up going down to Africa for the last QS in Morocco, and it was actually the only spot where I surfed every day. It was only beachies around there, but being right on Casablanca beach was epic. Super different, though. The locals would just give you the flick. You try to give them a nod to acknowledge 'em, kind of like back home, and they look right through ya! I was like, Who's behind me!? And they're just looking right past as if you're not even there. Heavy. It seemed like they couldn't be bothered, so I was like, Fine, not giving you a nod again! Haha.

"It was definitely a big stint. Lots of ups and downs and partying in between, but it was good to do it this year 'cause it's not really my main year on the QS, and I'm still getting a few results. I managed to crack the top 150 in the world on the first go, so with a bit more experience next year I should improve on that. You've just gotta go and experience it, so when you do it later in life you'll know what the travelling is like for each stop. We were kind of going over there with a blindfold over our eyes, not knowing anything about it."

If you can afford to just take a stab in the dark, blindfolds will occasionally make things more fun – like playing Twister or ordering foreign food. How else would most tourists discover the epicurean delights of snails or camel's hump? Sometimes, however, you need a bit of support to avoid potentially frustrating or even disastrous pitfalls.

"My number one supporter is definitely my dad. I wouldn't be anywhere in my life without what he's done for me. Just keeping me in line and the typical dad stuff that he does so well. Plus, before this year, he would've organised all of my stuff without needing me to be involved. But now he's grooming me to figure out what I have to do with getting itineraries together, booking trips and having everything organised. I get compliments from people going, How organised are you! And that's just from Dad. It's so handy to have everything in line.

"[Manager] Mick Cain has also helped me a lot in the last year, especially stepping up from juniors to the QS. He's had Matt Banting do a similar thing, so coaching with him has been really beneficial for me. I'll call him when I'm overseas, just to have a chat and get my mind off things like the job at hand. He's

from Port Macquarie, so it's only a little drive up the road to do training and stuff. Matt lives there, too, and at the start of the year I was training with both of them. Seeing how good Matt's surfing, I was like, Yeah, that's where I've gotta be!"

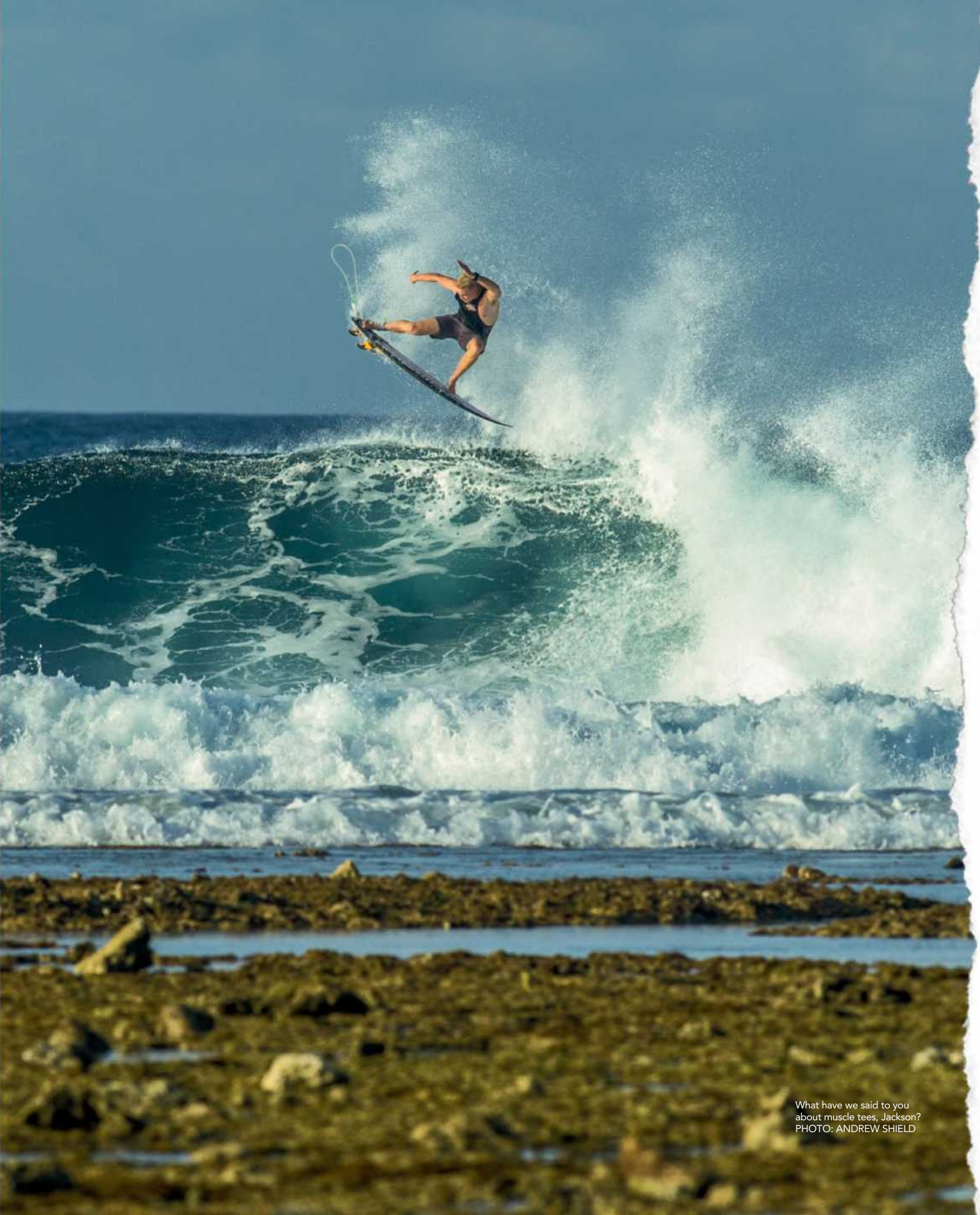
But where, exactly, is that? Having the right goals at Jacko's age can do wonders for turning potential into mind-blowing performances, and our favourite young Novocastrian is incredibly aware of what he needs to accomplish in the near future.

"I definitely want to improve on my backside surfing. I seem to have gotten a lot better in the last six months to a year or so, but it still has a little bit more to go. In Morocco, I got a 9.67 on a wave on my backhand, and I've never done that in my whole life. So it's getting there, but you watch a lot of guys and they're quick, they're fast, and they're powerful on their backhand. Preparing for the next couple of QS's next year I'll surf a lot of lefts, because my frontside seems to be pretty good. A bit of small-wave surfing over summer will help as well, because on the QS, you need to be quick and fast, and able to pop an air off any little section.

"On the flip side, I think I've improved on my freesurfing and magazine stuff. I've been getting a bit of love lately, just after getting results, then having a bit more recognition, and as that goes on, you get more and more opportunities to do things. In that sense, Bosko is another guy who has helped me a lot. He does everything for me – he's kind of like a second dad! Haha. He calls me up at five in the morning, like, Let's shoot! The light's perfect, get the flash out! Having someone like that, pushing you every day, helps you so much.

"There are a lot of things that scare you in surfing. Like, next month I'll be in Hawaii doing a three star at Sunset, and that's scary. You're always scared when you go to Hawaii, but you kind of put that aside. 'Cause if I get an OK result, it could mean that next year I'm in the Triple Crown, and how crazy would that be! Then if you did end up qualifying, coming into Chopes you've got a two-man heat and you've got to go. You want it to be like, Jacko had a dig out there! He surprised me! Instead of, Far out, he's a bit of a pussy, ay? If you qualify, you want people to like you; you want to be a popular person, particularly when you're travelling and within the surfers. You don't want to be that guy, Ah, Jacko... Nobody wants to roll with him. You want to be everyone's best mate, but then in a heat you want to just flog 'em."

Now that, ladies and gentlemen, sounds like the perfect balance. He's already a lot of people's best mate – Jacko just needs to figure out how to keep it that way if he keeps flogging everyone in the water. 🐟



What have we said to you
about muscle tees, Jackson?
PHOTO: ANDREW SHIELD



All pics by Andrew Shield.

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Isabella in a hella nice situation,
Tahiti, mid-swoop.
PHOTO: WILL ADLER





ISABELLA NICHOLS

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

 MIMI LAMONTAGNE

Clichés, despite their cringe-worthy attributes, exist because they're based on truth. So when we say, "Kids these days, they're just getting better and better, younger and younger," it's kitschy and it speaks more for our ageing, decrepit, surf-impaired knees than the quality of a grommet's shredding ability; but it's also true. Kids are doing airs before they stop sucking their thumb. In a lot of ways that's good – progression – but when a kid gets sponsored and flown around the world from age seven, it breeds an entitled, unappreciative surf dork. That's why speaking with Isabella Nichols was like a breath of fresh air.

"I didn't really start surfing until I was

11, and I know that seems young, but personally, I think I started late. I didn't even start competing until I was 14, almost 15," she said.

Despite being from the Sunshine Coast of Surf Cacophony, Isabella was never pushed to become a surfer. "Yeah, it wasn't until I randomly put my hand up for a grom comp at school that I even thought twice about it. I ended up going all the way to the finals, and because I didn't know anything about surfing, I dropped in on someone in the finals, and because of that got last place. But as weird as it sounds, that's what made me realise how fun it was. At that moment I kind of fell in love with surfing.



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Oh yeah, wanna disrespect girls' surfing? Take that! Pow!
PHOTO: ANDREW SHIELD

ISABELLA

"I kept on doing grom comps from there, every once in a while, but things didn't really start getting serious until the start of last year. Billabong picked me up, I started going on trips, and my life turned upside down. It's actually crazy how much has changed, so quickly. I'm barely at school; I've been travelling heaps, I'm going to all of these new places and I'm constantly surfing."

But unlike a lot of soon-to-be QS surfers, Isabella isn't putting all her eggs in the professional basket. She's finishing high school, and even now, faced with a looming QS slog and hopeful CT campaign,

says that she wants to go to university. "I would have dropped out of school if I didn't think that I wanted to go to uni. I'm going to take a break and do the surfing thing for a few years, but I want to go back to school and study engineering. Maths is my favourite subject, and I think it'd be really interesting. I guess I'm just open to whatever happens, at this stage. I want to keep my options open. I want to have choices in the future."

After speaking for a while, I came to the conclusion that Isabella's realist attitude is owed to the age she started surfing professionally. She

doesn't take it for granted that it'll always be there for her – that she'll always be this fortunate. She looks at surfing as a sport that she's really friggin' good at, and for a while, might be a good career path. And in a way, that casual attitude towards the whole thing has helped her succeed.

"Honestly, my only real goal is to just surf well. It's fun, and I can always get better. I obviously want to make the World Tour, but I make a conscious effort not to take it so seriously, all the time. Whenever I travel anywhere I make sure to take the time to sightsee and be a tourist, and enjoy it. Even at home



The spoils of her labour.
PHOTO: MORGAN MAASSEN

ISABELLA

I don't get too caught up. I have a life outside of surfing – I hang out with friends and do the normal stuff that normal teenagers do. I think that's really important, and if you don't get the opportunity to be relaxed about it then you're going to burn out."

I asked Isabella who she looks up to on the World Tour. "Steph, for sure. She seems like a really cool chick. She's not up herself or anything, and she rips. It's so good.

"I mean, if your goal isn't to just constantly

surf better, then what's the point? The guys and girls are both getting so much better so quickly. I don't know where the boundary will be set by the time I make the CT. And women's surfing is in such a good place at the moment – prize money keeps jumping up and they're starting to get more recognition. There are heavier waves on Tour, more diversified waves, you know? It's moving in a really positive direction and we should do everything we can to support that by being better surfers."

And Isabella isn't landing revert 540s or anything, but for only being a competitive surfer for a little over a year, we'd say she's progressing faster than a road runner being chased by a coyote. We reckon a lot of that is due to the fact that she doesn't take where she is in life, and all around the globe, for granted.

Never, ever underestimate the motivation that can come from appreciation. Keep your eye on Ms Nichols. 🐺

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Caleb Tancred looks like he's
wearing a Caleb Tancred mask.
I want a Caleb Tancred mask.
PHOTO: BRUNO VEIGA



You may be wondering how we can possibly compile a list of the hottest hotshots from our wave soaked island continent. How could we possibly create a list? How can we whittle it down; what's the method for deciding who goes where? Well it's simple – we're just psychopathically clinical and extremely harsh. We take this task seriously and we don't let emotion cloud our judgement. We study contest results and freesurfing performances. We take into account media exposure and a surfers' marketability. We base our appraisal on this year, but also consider the future. This isn't haphazard, it's a certain type of science, but it is just our opinion. Our very well informed, set in concrete, don't-dare-argue-with-it opinion.

This is still the most important project in Australian junior surfing. All of the guys and gals on these lists are at a point in their lives where they need to decide whether they're going to really have a go and climb the rankings – or make the leap off these rankings and onto the big stage. The surfers on these lists have the ability to make it to the first grade, we reckon, but it won't come easily. The standard of global surfing is such that being at the top end of the Hot 100 list is no longer a traveller to Championship Tour glory. There are Brazilians and Japanese and Americans and Europeans who are fighting hard to shift the centre of surfing dominance away from Australia, and the only people who can stop this from happening are listed below.

This is 2015's Hot 100, the definitive list of who's who and who's where in Australian junior surfing. These are our future champion's, our only hopes. If you're not on the list this year, there's always next – unless you're too old, and that happens pretty bloody quickly.

2015 GUYS

1. **KAI HING**, Wurtulla, QLD
2. **JACK ROBINSON**, Margaret River, WA
3. **SHELDON SIMKUS**, Tweed Heads, NSW
4. **JACOB WILCOX**, Gnarabup, WA
5. **KALANI BALL**, Stanwell Park, NSW
6. **ETHAN EWING**, North Stradbroke Island, QLD
7. **JACKSON BAKER**, Merewether, NSW
8. **RILEY LAING**, North Entrance, NSW
9. **QUINN BRUCE**, Coolangatta, QLD
10. **REEF DOIG**, Bali, IDN, Burleigh Heads, QLD
11. **CODY ROBINSON**, Jan Juc, VIC
12. **RUSSEL BIERKE**, Ulladulla, NSW
13. **JARED HICKEL**, Cronulla, NSW
14. **REEF HEAZLEWOOD**, Caloundra, QLD
15. **JEAMES YOUNG**, Angourie, NSW
16. **HARLEY ROSS-WEBSTER**, North Curl Curl, NSW
17. **JACKSON GILES**, Matraville, NSW
18. **MONTY TAIT**, Maroubra, NSW
19. **JOE VAN DIJK**, Phillip Island, VIC
20. **SHAUN MANNERS**, Margaret River, WA
21. **DYLAN RODGERS**, Shell Cove, NSW
22. **FRASER DOVELL**, Avalon, NSW
23. **JED MATTINSON**, Margaret River, WA
24. **ZAC WIGHTMAN**, Lennox Head, NSW
25. **KAI WARNER**, Narrabeen, NSW
26. **KAEAL WALSH**, Yallingup, WA
27. **LUKE WRICE**, Coledale, NSW
28. **Aaron Kelly**, Noosa, QLD
29. **Kyuss King**, Byron Bay, NSW
30. **Dextar Muskens**, Coolangatta, QLD
31. **Henry Hutchins**, Barwon Heads, VIC
32. **Noah Cooney**, Phillip Island, VIC
33. **Chris Zaffis**, Angourie, NSW
34. **Zane Clifford**, Boat Harbour, NSW
35. **Blaine Robinson**, Palm Beach, QLD
36. **Alex Hayes**, Queenscliff, NSW
37. **Mikey McDonagh**, Avoca Beach, NSW
38. **Dylan Totten**, Sale, VIC
39. **Thomas Prout**, Caloundra, QLD
40. **Toby Mossop**, Nobby Beach, QLD
41. **Micky Robinson**, Torquay, VIC
42. **Caleb Tancred**, Avoca Beach, NSW
43. **Dakoda Walters**, Angourie, NSW
44. **Walter Hiatt**, Cowes, VIC
45. **Luke Gyory**, Kingscliff, NSW
46. **Noah Munro**, Toukley, NSW
47. **Noah Kearney**, Caloundra, QLD
48. **Maddy Job**, Burleigh Heads, QLD
49. **Ryan Slattery**, North Gosford, NSW
50. **Sam Littlechild**, Mermaid Beach, QLD

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SMR. COLLECTION 2015

ADAMS BURNOUT PANEL VEST

KENSAL 21" COTTON WALKIE

HOT 100

We hope that Kyuss King screams his own name when he lays down slashes like this. KYUSS KING!
PHOTO: ANDREW CHRISTIE

51. Luke Hamilton, Merewether, NSW
52. Jake Snellgrove, Lennox Head, NSW
53. Sandon Whitaker, Avoca, NSW
54. Darcy Clump, Avalon, NSW
55. Locky Grange, Burleigh Heads, QLD
56. Jack Murray, Lennox Head, NSW
57. Morgan Cibilic, Merewether, NSW
58. Jake Edwards, Cottesloe, WA
59. Nathan Martin, Cronulla, NSW
60. Duke Nagtzaam, Yallingup, WA
61. Jamie Krups, North Curl Curl, NSW
62. Jarrod Szele, Warilla, NSW
63. Blair Mandall, Casuarina Beach, NSW
64. Sebastian Raubenheimer, Coolum Beach, QLD
65. Noah Stocca, Peregian Beach, QLD
66. Ethan Solberg, Vincentia, NSW
67. Samson Coulter, Balgowlah, NSW
68. Ben Hucker, North Shelly NSW
69. Luke Condon, Lennox Head, NSW
70. Zak Condon, Lennox Head, NSW
71. Liam O'Brien, Burleigh Heads, QLD
72. Kian Shahar, Suffolk Park, NSW

73. Thomas Harrison, Barwon Heads, VIC
74. Max McGuigan, Maroubra, NSW
75. Lennox Chell, Avoca, NSW
76. Harmon Kassulke, Manly, NSW
77. Pascal Hutchinson, Trigg Beach, WA
78. Kirra Green, Coolum Beach, QLD
79. Luke Glover, Caloundra, QLD
80. Josh Grange, Burleigh Heads, QLD

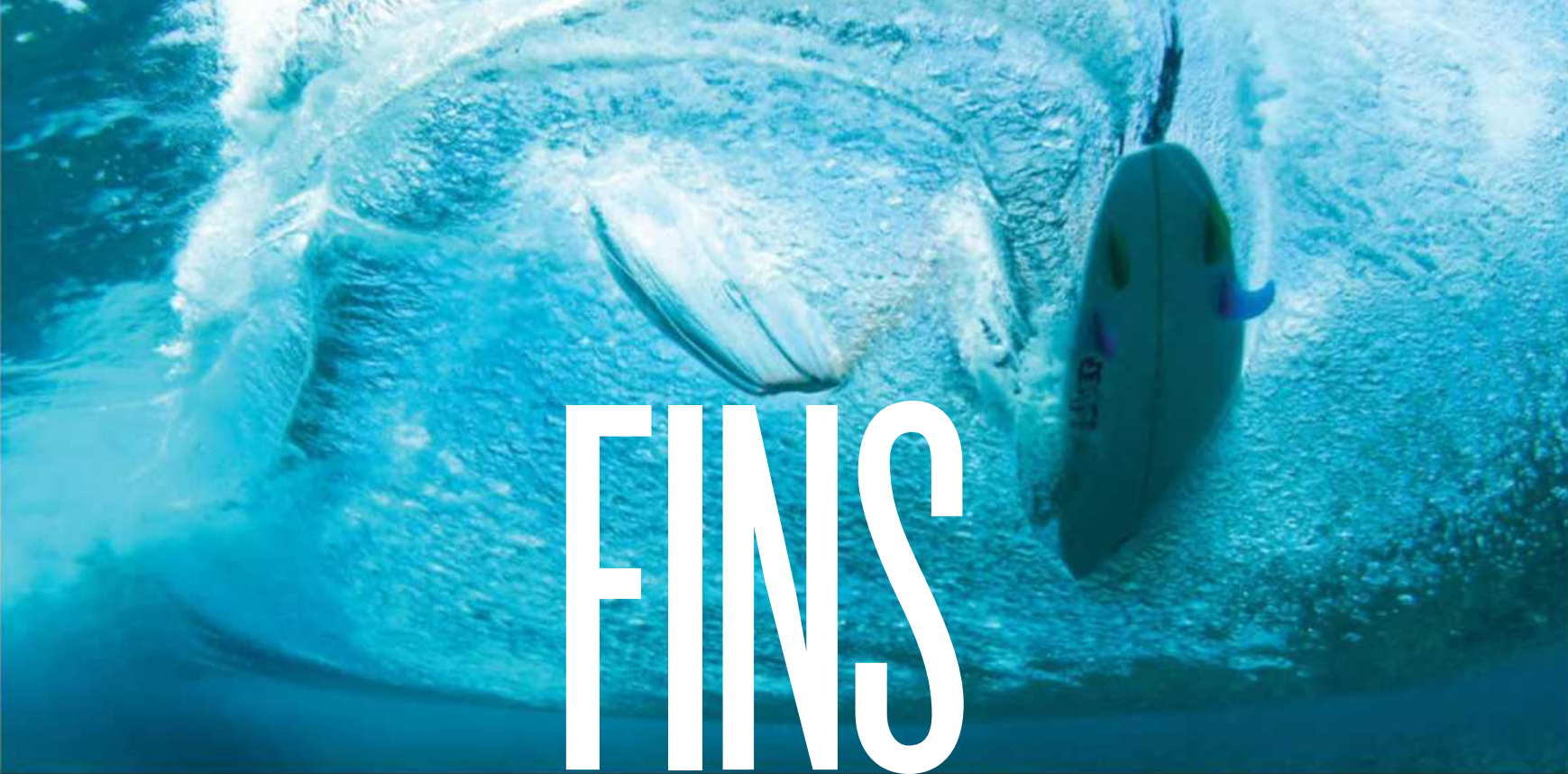
81. Jacob Connelly, Melbourne, VIC
82. Patrick Parker, Manly, NSW
83. Joe Brooker, Tweed Heads, NSW
84. Campbell Wright, Pambula Beach, NSW
85. Harry Clements, Wamberal, NSW
86. Josh Cattlin, Yallingup, WA
87. Brendan Wall, Shelly Beach, NSW
88. Dylan Moffat, Narrabeen, NSW
89. Max Kearney, Tugun, QLD
90. Joel Wood, Stanwell Park, NSW

91. Connor Lyons, Noosa Heads, QLD
92. Jagger Bartholomew, Coolangatta, QLD
93. Chad Elkins, Ulladulla, NSW
94. Keanu Miller, Bulli, NSW

95. Taj Watson, Sandy Beach, NSW
96. Benny Howard, Port Macquarie, NSW
97. Nathan Horwood, Currumbin, QLD
98. Erik Safstrom, Coffs Harbour, NSW
99. Jed Fasso, Byron Bay, NSW
100. Joel Paxton, Byron Bay, NSW

2015 GIRLS

1. Isabella Nichols, Coolum Beach, QLD
2. Holly Wawn, Bungan Beach, QLD
3. Holly-Daze Coffey, Coolangatta, QLD
4. Kobie Enright, Tweed Heads, NSW
5. Macy Callaghan, Avoca Beach, NSW
6. Lucy Callister, Burleigh Heads, QLD
7. Rubie Reents, Ulladulla, NSW
8. Billie Melinz, Coalcliff, NSW
9. Laura Poncini, Moffat Beach, QLD
10. Alyssa Lock, Coolangatta, QLD



FINS

BECAUSE WITHOUT 'EM WE'D BE STAND-UP BOOGERS

Fins matter, bro. After you and the waves and your board the next most important thing is the three, or four, or two, or one, or four and a little one, skeggs that dangle from the rear end of your shred stick's undercarriage. Gone are the days when you'd let the shaper glass whichever fin he wanted into your favourite board, and let it stay there forever, just as the days when you'd happily mix and match whichever removable fins that you

could steal from the boot of your buddy's Barina.

Nows-a-days fins are a matter of precision, crafted with care for a cacophony of conditions, easily interchanged, higher tech than surfboards, sometimes expensive, always important – in short, fins are the kind of thing that you want to really, really research, ponder, choose carefully, and hope that your selections turn out to be wise ones. Ain't nobody got time for bottom turn slide outs, just ain't nobody got no time for

no stiff top turns. There's a sweet spot with fins, and we're here to assist you in finding it.

This is your definitive guide to bottom-of-the-board enhancers, those little dangly things that keep your surfing on track. Have a flick through, learn a little about these oft-misunderstood aspects of the surfing experience, and then pair up your surf steed with the best wheels on the market. Get it right, because being branded a stand-up booger is surely a fate worse than goatboating.

FIN LOGIC

You wanna pick your fins based on what your board can do. The right fin set completes a board, helping you get the most out of it. It's like tuning a guitar to a fine pitch. Use the wrong set and damn! Out of tune.

BASE: Indicates the likely turn length and hold. A long-base fin commits a board to longer, driving rail turns; a shorter base frees a board for slides and vertical turns at the expense of drive.

DEPTH, OR HEIGHT: Indicates likely drive, hold and drag. A deep fin will stay in the water longer, keeping the board stable and "down" in turns, but will also drag more at speed. A shallow fin will drag less and allow the surfboard's design to dominate, but will let go earlier in turns.

RAKE, OR SWEEP: Indicates turning range. A raked fin will allow a wide variety of turns, and provides a higher level of feedback during a turn; it "feels" the water well. Where it might run into strife is in full-power carves and turbulent water. A shorter rake concentrates the fin's effort into a tighter turning range, but stays solid under power pressure.

SURFACE AREA: Indicates a fin's ability to control board volume and surfer size/power. Bulkier, wider-tailed boards and bigger, stronger surfers need fins with more surface area.

FLEX: Indicates a fin's ability to respond to pressure in a turn. A super-stiff fin with no flex will drive and drag exactly the same in every turn, providing certainty but no feel for the turn. A flexy fin will respond differently to different pressures; result, plenty of feel but uncertain drive. Tip flex and a secure base – giving drive and feel – is usually the trade-off.

FOIL – TWO TYPES:

BASE TO TIP FOIL: The change in fin thickness from base to tip. Controls how and where a fin flexes.

EDGE TO EDGE FOIL: The change in fin thickness from front edge to back edge. If it's symmetrical – if both sides of the fin are the same, as in most back fins – water will pass by the fin on either side at the same rate, stabilising the flow. If it's asymmetrical – one side different to the other, as in most side fins – water passes by on either side at different rates. This might mean all sorts of whacky stuff. A flat or concave inside foil will drive in turns yet drag at speed. A convex inside foil drags less, yet drives less too.



FCS II MATT BIOLOS MB TRI SET // \$169.95

Matt 'Mayhem' Biolos's signature template delivers a lively combination of drive, hold and manoeuvrability. This versatile template favours a stronger surfer, and can be pushed hard through turns, particularly in hollow sections. The high depth value of the fin also provides exceptional hold off the bottom, and adds control on the open face when performing a longer arc. Available in both Tri & Tri/Quad setups. "This fin will put a lot of speed and drive into your surfing." – Matt Biolos



FCS II PERFORMER NEO GLASS TRI SET // \$99.95

A reliable all-round fin for a diverse range of surfers, conditions and board types. Designed for surfers wanting a combination of speed and maneuverability with flow between turns.



FCS II ACCELERATOR NEO GLASS TRI SET // \$99.95

Oversized, all-round fin for a diverse range of surfers. Designed for surfers who like to attack the wave and surf with energy and power on critical parts of the wave.

FCS II MICK FANNING 'MF' TRI SET // \$169.95

Mick Fannings's signature fin has a dynamic flex pattern offering bursts of speed. This fin has plenty of drive and control, and will respond quickly at high speeds due to the refined foil and the bevel on the leading edge. Ideal for power surfers who like to snap hard off the top and carve long roundhouse cutbacks, this fin provides maximum drive. "My signature fin allows me to push as hard as I want but still stay in control" – Mick Fanning



FCS II REACTOR NEO GLASS TRI SET // \$99.95

A fast reacting fin for performing tight radius turns. Designed for surfers who like to stay tight in the pocket and perform aerial maneuvers.



FCS II CARVER NEO GLASS TRI SET // \$99.95

An elongated fin for performing long arc turns. Designed for power surfers who like to push hard against their fins and draw out their turns.

FUTURES

www.futurefins.com.au



HS1 GENERATION SERIES LARGE // \$169.95

The next level in speed generating fins is here with the all new **Generation Series**. These fins will provide all the speed you need while maintaining an element of control. Sitting one notch below the Blackstix on our Ride Number scale, all Generation Series fins hold Ride Numbers between 9 to 7, for those of you looking for a bit more stability & drive than Blackstix. Hayden worked with Futures to create an upright fin template with a well balanced tip and base area, designed for pivot bottom turns, keeping your board in the pocket – ideal for energetic beach breaks.



FEA BLACKSTIX 3.0 // \$179.95

The EA Blackstix has a springy flex pattern and V2 foil, designed to build speed and drive in smaller, softer waves. With a Ride Number of 9.8 it's a highly speed generating Medium sized fin. Ideal for Summer conditions.



JOHN JOHN TECHFLEX LARGE // \$174.95

The Medium John John Techflex has been a fan favourite. We've heard the call from customers and expanded the series. Introducing the Large and Small, whilst continuing the Medium and Extra Small. Now all surfers can ride what John John rides.

3DFINS

www.3dfins.com



CHRISTIAN FLETCHER SIGNATURE QUADS // \$170

One of the most innovative surfers ever, the Godfather of Aerial Surfing, with style and innovation to this day, Christian noticed the extra speed that dimples gave him, allowing his explosive speed and innovative ideas to continue to flourish. The front fins have an upright template allowing for sharp direction changes, with the rear fins complementing the front fins, having a more relaxed rake. The carbon base, combined with 3D's patented dimple technology, make these quads unbelievably fast and responsive, there are no dead spots. Inclusive of Christian Fletcher's unmistakable graphics using 3DFINS unique, embedded graphic process.



6.0 LIONHEAD THRUSTER // \$135

One of 3D's most popular templates ever-made has a carbon base for the first time. The Lionhead Thruster has amazing response and speed. Artist: Hans Bruechle.



5.0 WISE OWL THRUSTER // \$135

Josh Kerr rode these at both pumping Snapper Rocks during the Quiksilver Pro and in intense waves at The Box during the Margaret River Pro. The carbon base, combined with dimple technology, creates the ultimate all rounder. Artist: Hans Bruechle.

KOMUNITY PROJECT

www.komunityproject.com



KOM SERIES 2.0 // \$109.95

The Komunity Project series of fins provides the optimal ride for beginner, intermediate and advanced surfers. The new generation of fins are now made to fit both FCS and Future bases fin systems. The KP 2.0 Series incorporates Liquid Dynamics Technology, with a core honeycomb base. Construction features include a special-blend glass resin, carbon construction on selected models. You have the freedom to choose from the extensive range of thruster or quad sets, customised to your requirements.



NVD 3.1 // \$129.95

The Komunity Project series of Fins provides the optimal ride for beginner, intermediate and advanced surfers. The new generation of fin incorporates Liquid Dynamics Technology, with a core honeycomb base. Construction features include a special-blend glass resin construction.

KOM SERIES THUMB DRIVES // \$34.95 EACH

The Kom Series Thumb Drives – N1, N2 and N3 – provide the optimal ride as a trailer fin for short, long and SUP surfboards. These fins are foiled on both sides. The new generation of fins incorporates Liquid Dynamics Technology, with a core honeycomb base. Construction features include a special-blend glass resin construction customised to your requirements.

SCARFINI

www.watershack.com.au



HX 2.5 // Thruster: \$109, Quad: \$129

Available in FCS or Futures base - the HX 2.5 is an upright fin & less curved template to produce & maintain hi-speed. The smaller centre fin allows for quick tail release. They incorporate a hexagonal foam core material that offers the traditional fibreglass fin-like flex with the added advantage of weight reduction, the carbon base maintains rigidity for stability & drive which converts to a progressive tip flex.



HX 1 // Thruster: \$109, Quad: \$129, Quad Rear: \$64

Available in FCS or Futures base - the HX 1 is a well-balanced template with a medium base & medium tip, ideal for quad rears or grom thrusters. They incorporate a hexagonal foam core material that offering flex and weight reduction while maintaining rigidity for stability & drive.

FX MANTA // THRUSTER: \$129

Available in FCS or Futures base - the carbon design on the larger and more raked side fin creates a stiffer base and leading edge with a flexible and lively tip. The small, carbon centre fin provides quick tail release with rigidity for control. They incorporate a hexagonal foam core material that offering flex and weight reduction while maintaining rigidity for stability & drive.

SHAPERS SURF

www.shapers.surf



CARBON HYBRID CARV'N 6 FIN SET // \$199.95

The Carv'n features greater rake through the fins outline, purpose built for power carves and sweeping arc's. Ideal for point breaks and open face surfing where speed and flow are desirable. The Carv'n Fins have a wide base for a solid feel off the bottom turn, giving drive and control, whilst the fins tips are refined to provide speed and release off the top. The Carv'n Fin templates are very popular with our professional surf team who demand drive and hold through sweeping turns, however need release for radical maneuvers through and above the lip. Available in four sizes Small, Medium, Medium-Large & Large.



CARBON HYBRID MATT BANTING MB2 // \$129.95

The MB2 is inspired by Banting's progressive and explosive surfing. The fins sweep and wide fin base provides drive and hold through sweeping turns, while the smaller centre fin increases speed and provides release for moves through and above the lip.

CORELITE S6 // \$99.95

The S6 blends drive, control and release seamlessly and features a slightly more upright rake template to assist surfers achieve more pivot (tighter turning arc) whilst maintaining speed.

CAPTAIN FIN CO

wildthingsgallery.com.au



CF LARGE THRUSTER // \$144.95

The CF Series template was designed for reliable performance and has quickly become a favourite amongst the Captain Fin team. This template is a perfect balance of drive, pivot and hold and will deliver in all types of conditions. Available in small, medium and large. All Captain Fins are one and two tab compatible. If you can have only one set of fins, this template is the one to have. Seriously.



CF QUAD // \$179.95

The CF-Quad 4.69 generates tons of speed and works well in retro boards as well as modern-day quads. The raked back design tends to favour down-the-line waves and handles punchy beach breaks with style.

CHRISTENSON 5-FIN // \$229.95

Chris Christenson's 5-fin set-up is a medium template with a classic outline. Ride them as a thruster for powerful turns in the pocket, or go for the 4-fin option to loosen things up a bit.



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WRAP®**

surfer: asher wales

new taj baby buggy / 5'9 x 19.38 x 2.32 / 28.4 L

www.lostaustralia.com

photo: jesse little

lost

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WWW.AUSTRALIANBOARDRIDERSBATTLE.COM

WELCOME TO NORTH NARRABEEN

Where beautiful people go to spawn.

MIMI LAMONTAGNE

Although you can't see his face in this image, Cooper Chapman has the best jawline in surfing. Think Channing Tatum before he was ruined by Magic Mike. See, Coop's from North Narrabeen, the place in Australia where beautiful people go to spawn. Walk down the main drag and for a second you'll think you've landed in a beachside Beverly Hills.

But North Narrabeen is much better than BV, because in BV

people go to red carpet premieres and shockingly expensive bat mitzvahs for fun, and in NN people ditch the dazzle and take their beautiful children surfing. Those children then rise in the ranks of the North Narrabeen Boardriders Club and inevitably become professional surfers. Which is exactly what Mr Chapman and his chiselled jaw have done.

Anyways, here's what he has to say about his hometown and its club*. >>

* The North Narrabeen Boardriders Club also happens to be one of the largest clubs in Australia, which must in turn mean that this rock of ours has a whole lot of beautiful people. Yay for us.

Cooper Chapman, once victim of grommet abuse, gets his revenge on lips.
PHOTO: MATT DUNBAR



>> **BEST THING:** North Narrabeen and the lifestyle.
WORST THING: Not much wave variety.
BEST HEAT: Winning the Jim Beam Surf Tag is always fun.
WORST HEAT: Every heat you lose.
MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT: Staying with the team on the Gold Coast in a big house and having a sick weekend of beers, BBOs and then winning the Jim Beam Tag.

MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE CLUB: Respect.
CLUB LEGEND: Brett Bannister. He's won over 10 Opens Titles and is unstoppable in the events for the old boys.
MOST EMBARRASSING MOMENT: Falling on a wave when I needed a three to win the Boardriders Battle qualifiers, and ending up third because of it.
FUNNIEST STORY: Grommet

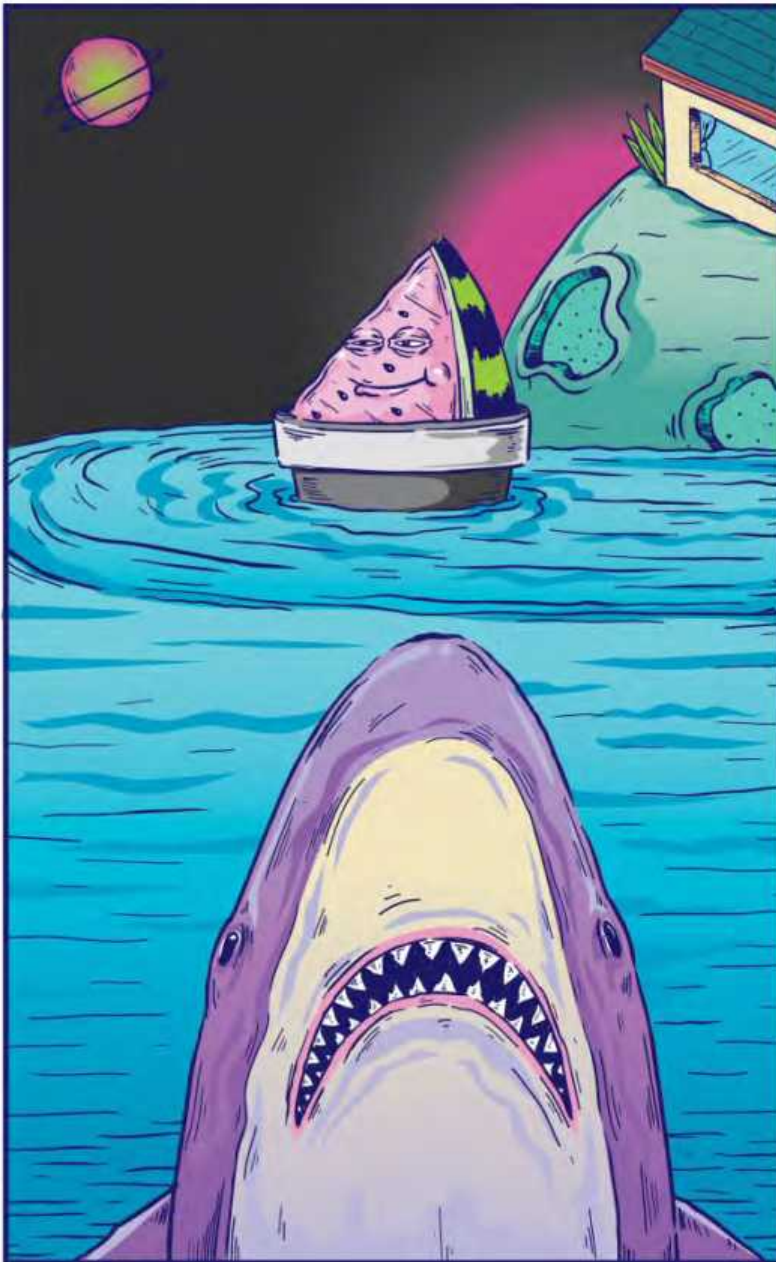
abuse used to be pretty funny when I was young. I remember getting buried up to my neck in sand and then having a bin put over my head while all the older forms threw rocks at it.
CLUB GROMMET: Matt Hardy. He's one of the older boys, but surfs and froths more than anyone.
RIVALRY: Probably Snapper and LeBa – just all the teams who give us a run for our money.

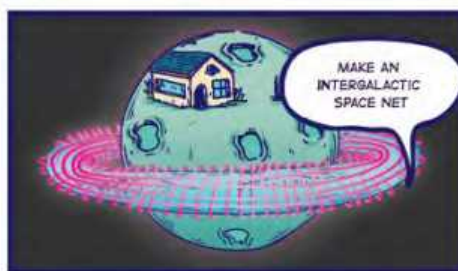
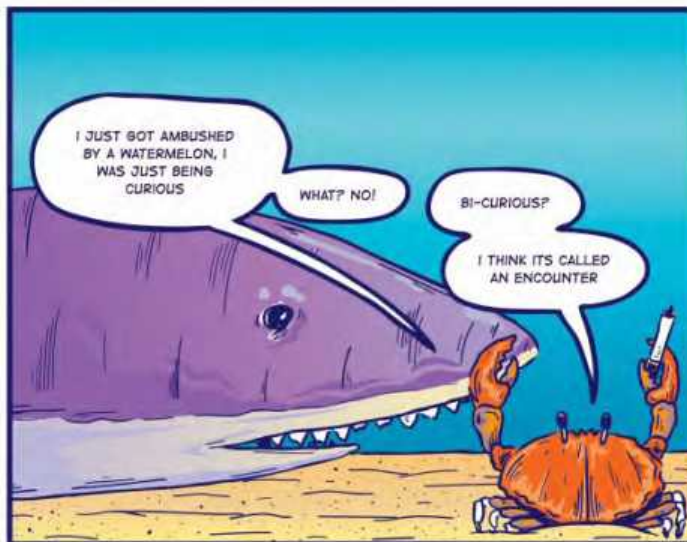
CELEBRATIONS: Shit gets pretty wild. I think everyone knows how well Narrabeen celebrates, haha.
CLUB ANIMAL SPIRIT: Eagle.
CLUB VEGETABLE SPIRIT: Broccoli. Everyone hates it, but it's good for you.
CLUB FEMALE POP STAR: Laura Enever.
CLUB BAND: Nirvana.
CLUB DRINK: Tooheys New.
CLUB THEME SONG: Survivor, "Eye of the Tiger".
CLUB MOTTO: NN RIPS.

WHAT DOES THE CLUB MEAN TO NORTH NARRABEEN? Our boardriders club and footy club are both pretty close. Everyone is a mate and we all have each other's backs. It's a massive family who looks after and supports each other.
LASTING EFFECTS: The club has produced some of the best surfers in the world, and has really put the Northern Beaches on the map.

SPACE BOIEEE

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY BRENT SMITH
@BIFFYBRENTANO





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SURFINZ

Ask for Surfinz on your next board - why? Because it will take your dual tab fins, you can adjust them forward or back & the under the glass install is the strongest option. Rail boxes come pre-set at 6 or 10 degree cant giving you every option to accommodate flat bottoms, deep channels or concaves. Surfinz carbon composite fins, available in L/Board centres, S/Board Thrusters / Quads / Quin or Grom Quin's with FREE Nibbler Mini Pivot fin! Extremely strong, durable & reliable. Surfinz is the fastest growing & simplest fin system on the market today!

<http://surfinz.com/>

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ECOXGEAR

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SURF LOCK

Surf Lock is the ideal solution to an age-old problem, it's not safe to leave your car keys hidden somewhere on your car or wrapped up in a beach towel. Surf Lock can be easily attached to different locations on your car, providing a safe & secure place to store your car keys or immobiliser while enjoying the outdoors. When not in use, the lock is small enough to be kept in the glove box of your car. Ideal for surfers, swimmers, adventuring outdoors, boating or fishing.

It can be secured to the tie down on your vehicle, your roof rack, wheel or trailer & is great anytime you need to leave your car but can't or don't want to carry your keys with you. Don't become a statistic, take security seriously with Surf Lock & don't be left watching from your surfboard as someone drives off in your car!

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SUN PROTECTION



ISLAND TRIBE

Researched & developed by leading sunscreen laboratories in both Australia & South Africa, alongside professionals in the industry, to ensure that the formulas developed are world class. Island Tribe sunscreens are designed to give the user maximum protection against both UVA & UVB rays, each sunscreen having been designed with a unique consumer in mind. In addition to this, our products are recognised by the TGA as protection against the harmful effects of the sun. Launched in 1992 with the aim of providing a waterproof sun protection for all watersport enthusiasts, the range consisted of only the Clear Gel, which to this day has been unrivalled by competition. Now distributed in 25 countries, the Island Tribe sunscreen range is different from conventional sun ranges due to its CLEAR gel products & the water resistance they offer. We pride ourselves in having the most trusted water resistant sunscreen on the market.

Wax Buddy



WAX BUDDY

Simply put, the Wax Buddy is the perfect wax tool, try it once & you will never go back to using ordinary wax combs again.

Made from 100% recycled ABS plastic. Also a great option for private label branding.

www.waxbuddy.com

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MY GO

The MyGo Mouth Mount for GoPro® & action sports cameras has a comfortable Rubber Mouthpiece, bite supports for stable footage, a massive air channel for unrestricted breathing & a low profile lanyard to keep your camera close. We thought of everything!

Designed with flexibility & ease-of-use in mind & motivated by one surfer's desire to share what it feels like to get spit out of a macking barrel, we knew that the traditional options for GoPro® mounts just wouldn't suffice. The result is a compact, lightweight & sturdy mouth mount that can get you the sickest shots of your biggest tricks & waves as you see them. Beware, it's extremely addicting!

OUCH!

SPRAY



OUCH

This 100% Herbal formulation is safe for children of all ages & can be re-applied as often as needed.

Ouch! Instant Sting Relief Spray & Insect Repellent are proudly manufactured in Australia. 100% Herbal and organic, the range does not contain any nasty chemicals so it can be used for the entire family - most of all young children. Tested in some of the harshest environments by some of the biggest sceptics Ouch! has quickly become the product of choice amongst outdoor enthusiasts. Compact & Lightweight, can be carried in any purse, handbag, shirt or boardshort pocket. With over 300 sprays per pack the range is affordable & is a must for your next outdoor adventure.

STAR FINS



STARFIN

With designer Ben Lexcen, Cheyne Horan developed a winged keel fin based on an America's Cup sailboat design. The Star Fin has been a great success for Cheyne & continues to sell well today... now seeing increased growth through retro single fins, longboards & SUP.

SCARFINI

FINS



SCARFINI

A simple, high quality fin range growing from strength to strength.

Covers everything from Thruster to Groms to Quads to Keels.

Finger grip

Removable rock



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Your hands take a lot of abuse. On the tradesman's list of top offenders you'll find splinters, nails, wires and all manner of other malicious bits and bobs waiting for their chance to attack. Even worse, Surfing Life's danger factors range from grabbing overly hot cappuccinos to slipping on sweaty keyboards and spraining a knuckle. So whether you're a genuinely masculine he-man who shears sheep and rebuilds hot rods, or a manual-labour-avoiding dandy like us, they'll always need a bit of attention if they're going to look (and feel) their best. Enter The Hand Stuff, which boasts an all-star cast of sexy natural ingredients to rejuvenate your delicate paws. Shea Butter. Coconut oil. Sunflower seed oil. Vitamin E. Even Lanolin (yes, lanolin, like sheep's wool) makes an appearance. Sure, you won't be able to sand back small surfboard dings with nothing but your callused palms anymore, and someone other than your grandma might even want to hold your hand. But they're just the risks you take when you enter the world of gloriously smooth hands. Enjoy responsibly.

– ML fiikelectricskateboards.com.au



DRAGON

#GETSHADED

Shot something sick recently? Chuck it up on Instagram with #GETSHADED, and if it gets selected as our reader photo of the month, there'll be a fresh pair of sunnies en route to your mailbox. Get 'grammin! This month's winner is: @dane_colley

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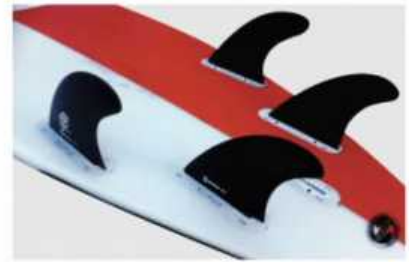
SIN EYEWEAR

SINISTER

\$49.99

Part of the handmade collection launched for summer, the Sinister is built from premium acetate with a CR-39 lens and stainless steel hinging. An on-trend, unisex styling ready for summer parties.

Sharehouses; rundown, decrepit, over-crowded, under-resourced... but an extra-large-value-pack-of-Mi-Goreng sized amount of fun. In your first couple of years out of school – working/uni/TAFE/apprenticeship – you're doing yourself a disservice if you don't spend some time in such a hovel; lots of surf time, hanging out with your pals, questionable dietary habits, any excuse for a party. In this instance, the excuse we had for a party was our mate, Blainey, who worked at the local bottle shop, provided us with a couple of cases of 'damaged' beer for a very, very cheap price. Game on! There were half-naked gals in the pool, bless 'em, a makeshift band playing on the deck, some illegal fireworks and all kinds of legal and not-so-legal substances – and all of this at 1pm on a Tuesday afternoon. Such wonderful neighbours, we were. Somewhere toward the end of the needless revelry, our toilet backed up and overflowed, we lost our roommate's pet rat, and the band's PA short-circuited the entire block's power supply. Looking back, perhaps it wasn't the greatest Summer Party ever... but I have no doubt it would have looked even more beautiful through a pair of Sinisters from Sin Eyewear. Grab a pair now and make some bad decisions... here's to feeling good all the time! – RJ sineyewear.com.au



SURFINZ

Extremely strong, durable and reliable, Surfinz will take any dual tab fins from other systems, only with Surfinz, they can be adjusted back and forth in the Surfinz box system. Featuring a very simple and fast box installation and a wide variety of fin options.

There's nothing quite as edgy in this day and age than supplanting an 's' for a 'z'. Now, we're not talking about the Americanised spelling where a 'z' appears in the middle of a word (Americanized), but instead at the end of words. Like Wordz, which is a word game aimed at brats, or Bratz, the sassy fashion dolls for kids, or anything with the suffix '-kidz', which seem to be games for tin lids.... You get my drift. It's a sure-fire way to endear yourself to those wishy-washy kids, Gen Y begets Z, them of the graffiti and 7-Eleven slurpees and Nicki Minaj. The thing with the future is that you can either keep up, or get left behind, and there's nothing for us back there, so let's trudge onwards. Enter Surfinz, yet another fin system, but the only one that allows you to slide your fins (finz) up and down the box – innuendo. If the edgy use of the 'z' and the unique, slidey fin box isn't enough to win over these goddamn hard-to-please juveniles then nothing is! Whaddya want us to do, put our hats on sideways? Say that things are on fleek? – WD watershack.com.au

CREW

EDITORIAL

EDITOR: Wade Davis wade@surfinglife.com.au
 MANAGING EDITOR: Ryan Jones ryan@surfinglife.com.au
 DESIGNER AND APP DEVELOPER: Dave Read david@morrissonmedia.com.au
 BOARD SPORTS VIDEO PRODUCER: Sam Norwood sam@surfinglife.com.au
 ONLINE EDITOR: Mimi LaMontagne mimi.l@surfinglife.com.au
 INTERN: Sam Zubevich sam.z@surfinglife.com.au
 CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Gra Murdoch gra@morrissonmedia.com.au
 FEATURES EDITOR: Nick Carroll ncsurf@ozemail.com.au
 FEATURES EDITOR: Tim Baker tim@bytimbaker.com
 PUBLISHER – BOARD SPORT TITLES: Craig Sims craig@morrissonmedia.com.au

CONTRIBUTORS

Tim Baker, Chris Binns, David "Crappy" Campbell, Nick Carroll, Mariah Ernst, Mimi LaMontagne, Jed Smith, Brittany Lee Waller.

SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Scott Bauer, Ray Collins, Andrew Chisholm, Hilton Dawe, Damea Dorsey, Stuart Gibson, Ted Grambeau, Duncan Macfarlane, Tim McKenna, Trent Mitchell, Bill Morris, Russell Ord, Shane Peel, Lee Pegus, Daniel Russo, Andrew Shield.

THE ASL PHOTO FAMILY

Nate Adams, Eric Aeder, Scott Aichner, Damon Arandelovic, Shelli Bankier, Brent Biemann, Brian Biemann, John Bilderback, Peter Boskovich, Art Brewer, Chris Burkard, John Callahan, Tom Carey, Sylvain Cazenave, Jason Childs, Steve Conti, Justin Crawford, Tyler Cuddy, Mick Curley, Jeff Divine, Jack English, Grant Ellis, Alfredo Escobar, Jon Farthing, Jeff Flindt, Pete Frieden, Hank, Rob Hazelwood, Yassine Hilal, Leith Holtzman, Dick Hoole, Dustin Humphrey, Mark Johnson, Joli, Lucia Griggi, Nick LaVecchia, Nathan Lawrence, Morgan Maassen, Brad Masters, Ryan Miller, Jason Murray, Mark Newsham, Dave Nelson, Rod Owen, Jason Reposar, John Respondek, Tom Servais, Roger Sharp, Peter Simons, Jamie Scott, Kelly Smith, Mickey Smith, Chris Straley, DJ Struntz, Ian Stewart, Patrick Trefz, David Troyer, Marty Tullemans, Corey Wilson, Scott Winer.

ADVERTISING

NATIONAL SALES MANAGER: Andy Rosenberg 0421 384 428 andyr@morrissonmedia.com.au
 ACCOUNT MANAGER: Rob "Bainy" Bain 0433 795 595 rob.b@morrissonmedia.com.au
 AD PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR: Claire Hutchence (07) 5520 9128 claireh@morrissonmedia.com.au

GENERAL MANAGER: Craig Sims craig@morrissonmedia.com.au
 FINANCIAL CONTROLLER: Pete Moreny pete.m@morrissonmedia.com.au
 PRODUCTION MANAGER: John "Jackhammer" Harland john@morrissonmedia.com.au
 CIRCULATION MANAGER: Adam Brown (07) 5520 9124 adam.b@morrissonmedia.com.au
 IT MANAGER: Josh Croft josh@morrissonmedia.com.au
 DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR: Jason Collins jason.c@morrissonmedia.com.au
 ADMINISTRATION: Angela Thompson, Kim Woodward
 PROOFREADER: Noel O'Halloran
 SUBSCRIPTION & MERCHANDISE MANAGER: Marina Thomas subs@surfinglife.com.au



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ONLINE

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PHONE

1800 069 918 within Australia
+61 7 5576 1388

EMAIL

subs@surfinglife.com.au

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We've been playing this Hot 100 game for a while now, playing with groms' futures by arbitrarily comparing them to one another, creating life-long rivalries by stacking them in rankings that we've made up ourselves and toying with people's lives by playing favourites.

Of course we're joking. We take the Hot 100 very seriously, as we're very aware of the impact it can have. If you think we haven't nailed it, just let us know.

Another thing that we take seriously is the

seeming increase in shark attacks. So many! So scary! And we seem to be the consistent losers in our interactions with them. Now, we're not on the "cull 'em all" bandwagon, but we're not on the, "it's their domain, if you don't want to be eaten, don't swim" bandwagon either. Protect people and respect sharks, that's what we're all about, and so next month we thought that we'd get right to the bottom of it all.

We don't want to scare you out of the water, but just inform you about what's going on so you'll feel safer in it. As surfers staying

out of the water isn't an option, no matter how dangerous it becomes, and so we're going to sift through the fear and hysteria and unreasonable wildlife hugging and try to arrive at a balanced and fair and informative appraisal of precisely what the heck is going on out there.

Surfing Life 328 will be about sharks and so much more, and is on shelves December 3rd, sooner for those of you sexy subscribers whose Christmases come early every month.



THANKS FOR COMING

Northern NSW looks beautiful above the sea,
but once you dip below she gets a li'l spicy...
PHOTO: ANDREW SHIELD



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